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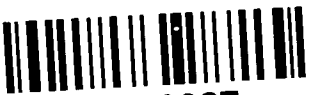
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# OUR INDIAN EMPIRE;

## ITS HISTORY AND PRESENT STATE,

FROM

THE EARLIEST SETTLEMENT OF THE BRITISH IN HINDOSTAN,
TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1843.

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BY

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AUTHOR OF THE CHAPTERS ON
'CIVIL AND MILITARY TRANSACTIONS' IN THE 'PICTORIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.'

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# OUR INDIAN EMPIRE.

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY INTERCOURSE.

THE discovery, by Vasco de Gama, in the year 1498, of the way to India by the Cape of Good Hope, turned the trade of Hindustan into a new channel, depriving the Venetians, the Genoese, and other states or peoples, of the advantages they had derived from it, so long as it had been carried on by the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, across Persia and Asia Minor, or across Egypt and the Isthmus of Suez, and thence by the Mediterranean to the shores of Europe; and it placed all the valuable part of that great trade in the hands of the Portuguese, who, by their possession of Malacca, secured the trade of the Indian Archipelago, and by their settlements at Goa and Diu, and at various other parts of Malabar, monopolized the commerce with Europe during the sixteenth century. In the early part of the seventeenth century, the English, Dutch, and French, going round by the Cape, began to appear upon the field, and the Portuguese lost their influence as rapidly as it had been acquired.

Thomas Cavendish—one of the adventurous circumnavigators of Elizabeth's days, and of the school that produced our Drakes and Raleighs—returned, in the year 1588, from a two years' voyage, during which he had explored the Indian Archipelago, and visited the isles of Molucca, "where," he says, "among some of the heathen people, I was well entreated, and where our countrymen may have trade as freely as the Portugals, if they themselves will." His report stimulated the first application to government by a memorial in the name of "divers merchants," addressed to the Lords of the Council, in 1589, for the royal permission to send three ships, and as many pinnaces, on a voyage to India; but this application does not appear to have been attended to.

The first expedition destined for India had not trade for its object so much as plunder, being intended to cruize against the Portuguese: it was fitted out in 1591, under the command of a Captain Raymond; but before it reached the Cape of Good Hope the crews suffered so much that one vessel was sent home with the sick; the principal ship was lost soon after they doubled the Cape, and Captain James Lancaster, in the remaining vessel, sailed from the East to the West Indies, where she also was lost, and whence Lancaster returned to Europe on board a French privateer, or buccaneer.

The capture by Sir Francis Drake of five Portuguese carracks, laden with the products of India—the enterprise of some members of the Turkey or Levant Company, who conveyed their merchandise from Aleppo and Bagdat, and thence down the Tigris to Ormus in the Persian Gulf, on to Goa, and afterwards visited Agra, Lahore, Bengal, Pegu, and Malacca—the account given by an Englishman, named Stevens, who had sailed with the Portuguese from Lisbon to Goa—and intelligence from other channels—all contributed to keep alive and increase the excitement and desire for a more intimate acquaintance with, and a more immediate participation in, the riches of the East. But it was not until the Dutch, in 1595, had dispatched four ships to trade with India by the Cape of Good Hope, that the jealousy and ambition of the English were

effectually roused; and at last, in 1599, a company or association was formed in London, a fund was raised by subscriptions of individuals that amounted to 30,133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, and a committee of fifteen were deputed to manage it.

A petition to the queen, for a warrant to fit out three ships, to export bullion, and also for a charter of privileges, was favourably received, but the granting it was delayed in consequence of a treaty then pending with Spain. To further the wishes of the petitioners, Sir John Mildenhall was sent by Constantinople overland on an embassy to the Great Mogul; his mission was of no effect, he being thwarted by the Portuguese and Venetian agents in all his endeavours to establish a good understanding. The adventurers renewed their application in the following year, and obtained permission to make preparations for an Indian voyage; and, by the 8th of October, five ships were provided, and Captain James Lancaster, the lucky survivor in the unfortunate expedition of 1591, was chosen to command the fleet. On the 31st of December, 1600, the charter of privileges was granted, constituting the adventurers a body politic and corporate, by the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London, trading to the East Indies." It was limited to a period of fifteen years; but if not found advantageous to the country, it might be annulled under a notice of two years; it was exclusive, prohibiting all others trading within the limits assigned to the Company, without their licence. The fleet sailed from Torbay on the 2nd of May, 1601, carrying letters from the queen to the sovereigns of the various ports to which it might resort. The first place in India that they visited was Acheen, in the island of Sumatra, where they were favourably received. They formed a treaty of commerce; obtained permission to erect a factory; and, having taken on board a quantity of pepper, sailed for the Moluccas. In the Straits of Malacca they captured a large Portuguese vessel, having on board calicoes and spices which sufficed to lade the fleet; they therefore altered their course to Bantam, in the island of Java, left some agents—the first rudiments of the Company's factories—and returned to England in September, 1603, with a handsome profit on the capital employed in the voyage.

After this, up to 1612, eight other voyages were performed to the islands in the Indian Ocean, the clear profits being hardly ever below 100 per cent., and in general more than 200 per cent. on the capital invested.

In 1604, a licence, in violation of the company's charter, was granted to Sir Edward Michelborne and others; but this was compensated in 1609, by James I. renewing the charter, confirming all their privileges, not for a limited time, but for ever—although still stipulating, that if found to be injurious to the nation, the charter should cease after three years' notice. In 1608, the factors at Bantam and the Moluccas stated, that the calicoes and cloths from the continent of India were in great request; and, in consequence, the fleet that sailed in 1609, under the orders of Sir H. Middleton, steered for the western coast of Asia; but at Aden and Mocha they were opposed by the Turks, and on the coast of India by the Portuguese. A fleet that sailed in 1611 succeeded better; although at Swally, near Surat, they had to defend themselves from the attack of a large Portuguese armament. A commercial arrangement was made, and permission was obtained to establish factories at Surat, Ahmedabad, Cambaya, and Goga. On the 11th of January, 1612, a firman or decree of the Mogul emperor was received, confirming these privileges, and authorizing the first establishment of the English on the continent of India.*

Few great things have had a smaller beginning than that stupendous anomaly, the British empire in India. It was in the course of the year 1612, in the reign of James I., that the English, stimulated by the efforts and successes of the Portuguese and Dutch, established their first humble factory at Surat. By degrees other petty settlements were formed along the western side of the peninsula, Surat continuing to have the control over them all, till the

* Mill, Hist. of British India.—Harris's Voyages.

Surat. From a View in the Library of the East India Company

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cession of Bombay to the company by Charles II., in 1668, when that town, from its fine harbour and central situation, rose to be the superior settlement in that part of India. At this period the nominal sovereigns and masters of the whole of India, and the real masters and tyrants of the greatest part of it, were the Mohammedanized Mogul Tartars, a people widely different in origin, manners, laws, and religion from the Hindus, the aboriginal or very ancient inhabitants of the country.

At the beginning of the tenth century of our era, or about seventy years before the conquest of England by the Normans, Sultan Mahmood of Ghizni, who is universally regarded as the first Mohammedan conqueror of Hindustan, acquired by the sword, and by many battles and massacres, nearly the whole of the country from the Indus to the Ganges. The dynasty of Ghizni was subverted, in less than two hundred years, by new Mohammedan conquerors from Gaur in Khorasan, who, though at first defeated by some of the Hindu rajahs, who endeavoured to restore the independence and ancient religion of their race, conquered the greater part of the provinces, took Delhi, and made it the seat and centre of government. This Mohammed, called the Gaurian, was assassinated in the year 1206, when the empire he had founded was split into several parts. In 1289 the Gaurian dynasty was wholly terminated by another assassination, and the partial dominion of India passed into the hands of the Afghans, who subdued the Rajpoots, a portion of the unfortunate Hindu race who had hitherto preserved their independence. The Afghans also added to their dominion the greater part of the Deccan, pitilessly slaughtering the Hindu rajahs. But in India no dynasty long preserved the qualities which had made them conquerors; the Afghan princes became weak and degenerate; many of the Hindu rajahs in the Deccan and in Bengal recovered their independence; and then, in the last years of the fourteenth century, Timur the Mogul Tartar, commonly called by our writers Tamerlane, overturned the Afghan dynasty altogether. As Timur did not remain in the scene of his victories and devastations, the country became divided into a number of small independent states, some Mohammedan and some Hindu. But in 1526, Baber, a descendant of Timur, swept away by a new invasion these petty principalities and powers, extended one compact dominion as far as the Ganges, and quietly erected the Mogul throne in Delhi. The second prince in succession from Baber, the great Akbar, who began to reign in 1556, set the Mogul dominion upon a firm basis, chiefly by consulting the interests and feelings of the Hindus, who, counting the whole of the extensive country, were a hundredfold more numerous than their conquerors. The great Akbar had been dead only seven years when the English timidly made their first settlement at Surat.

The Portuguese, who had numerous settlements along the Malabar coast, especially at Goa and Diu, and who claimed, on the ground of prior possession, an exclusive right to the commerce of the Indian seas—a pretension they were, for a long time, enabled to make good by possessing Malacca—watched the progress of the English with great jealousy, and from the first attempted to check it. The English Company armed their trading vessels, and, though there was peace in Europe between the respective mother countries, several combats took place with the Portuguese on the Indian seas. Captain Best, in the year 1612, defeated them in two actions, and these victories not only raised the reputation of the English, but enabled them to establish in quiet their first factory at Surat. In the year 1614 King James, at the solicitation of the infant company, sent an embassy to the court of the Emperor of Delhi to settle their commerce and cultivate a friendly connexion. Sir Thomas Roe, the person selected for this mission, was an observing and clever man. He sailed from Gravesend on the 24th of January, 1615, and arrived in September at Surat, where he landed in great pomp with eighty men-at-arms in his train. As the Mogul emperor was then residing at Ajmere, Sir Thomas, after some rest, proceeded thither through the country of the Rajpoots. He arrived at Ajmere on the 23rd of December, but was not ad-

mitted to court till the 10th of January (1616). The Emperor Jehanghire received him with unusual honour, and he was assured by the Mogul courtiers that no other ambassador, not even from their co-religionists the Mohammedans of Turkey or Persia, had ever obtained so flattering a reception. Many other interviews followed; and, as both the emperor and ambassador were of a sportive turn, they had, by means of interpreters, some jocular conversation. Sir Thomas, however, soon found that his success was thwarted by the intrigues of the Portuguese missionaries, and by the suspicion or caution of the emperor's favourite son and ministers. With much perseverance and address, he at last succeeded in procuring a confirmation of former grants of territory, and an extended privilege of having resident English agents at some of the principal towns in the empire. The able ambassador then returned to the coast and sailed to Persia, where he succeeded in obtaining every privilege which could promote the trade of the company with the Persian Gulf, from Shah Abbas, the reigning sovereign, and the greatest that has in modern times appeared in Persia.

The Portuguese were prevented only by the inferiority of their naval power from proceeding to war against the new English settlements. The Dutch, who were more on a par with us in this respect, viewed with an equally jealous eye the successes of the company; and when the English attempted to obtain a share in the lucrative trade carried on by the Dutch with the Spice Islands, the detestable massacre of Amboyna was the immediate consequence.

At the island of Amboyna, the largest of the Molucca group, and the richest in cloves, the Dutch had a strong castle with a garrison of 200 men, while the English, only 18 in number, occupied a defenceless house in the town, being secured, as they conceived, in possession of it by agreements and treaties with the Dutch. Yet the Dutch chose to suspect that this handful of English intended to dispossess them of their castle; and thereupon, inviting them all in a friendly manner to pay a visit to their governor in the castle, they put them to rack and torture, until some of the weakest of them, under the agonies of those infernal machines, confessed to the words which their torturers put into their mouths. As soon as their sufferings were suspended they retracted what they had said; but the Dutch put them upon the rack again, and then the anguish and the weakness of nature repeated the confession. The end of all was that Captain Towerson and nine others were condemned to die, by what may properly be called the verdict of the rack; and the remaining eight were pardoned by Dutch mercy and magnanimity. With a delicate consideration for their spiritual welfare, their murderers allowed a Dutch clergyman to administer the sacrament to the ten victims; and in the act of taking it, and afterwards with their dying breath, the Englishmen protested their entire innocence. Their heads were cut off with a scimitar. Out of regard to his superior rank, a black pall was provided for Captain Towerson, the expense of which the Dutch, like regular men of business, set down to the charge of the English company! One Portuguese and nine natives of Japan, put to death at the same time as accomplices with the English, solemnly protested in dying that they knew nothing of the imputed plot.

From the occurrence of this frightful tragedy (in 1622) the English abandoned the commerce of the Spice Islands to their rivals; and for some time, owing to various causes, such as the smallness of capital held by the company, some radical defects in its constitution, the heavy expenses incurred in keeping up a naval force for protection against Dutch and Portuguese, and the waywardness of some of the native princes, the English power seemed to decline, and the company became embarrassed and in great distress. In the mean time, however, their agents from Surat had obtained permission, through the good offices of Mr. Boughton, a surgeon in great favour with the Emperor of Delhi, Shah Jehan, son of Jehanghire, to make a new settlement at Hooghly; and the ground on which Madras, or Fort St. George, stands had been obtained from a native prince in 1640,

when Mr. Francis Day began to erect a fortress, which was gradually surrounded by a thriving and still increasing town, to which the natives flocked as to the best place for pursuing trade and putting in security the wealth they derived from it —wealth which had few safeguards under the dominion or in the territories of their own princes and chiefs. In the same interval the Mogul empire had been shaken by several revolutions and changes in its interior or upon its frontiers: the Hindus of Rajpoot had recommenced their struggles for independence; the Afghans had revolted in the north, the Usbeks had taken possession of Cabul, and the Persians of Candahar. In all places remote from the centre of government the Mohammedan chiefs paid but an imperfect obedience to the Great Mogul; and wherever favoured by local situation, or defended by mountains, forests, or rivers, the Hindus bade defiance to the emperor and his lieutenants. Then came on the great civil war in England between the parliament and Charles I., during which nearly all foreign trade was suspended, and the company sunk to such a state of insignificance that its existence as a body corporate was scarcely discernible. Indeed, from the year 1652 to 1657 the trade to India was thrown open to every English merchant that chose to embark in it. But, at the end of that period, Oliver Cromwell renewed or re-confirmed the privileges of the old company. Shortly after the restoration of monarchy, Charles II. granted the company a new charter, dated April, 1661, in which not only were all the old privileges confirmed, but new and important ones added to them. The company were vested with a right of exercising civil jurisdiction and military authority; and with the power of making war and of concluding peace with the "Infidels of India," the state reserving to itself the prerogatives of peace and war with regard to Christian or European governments. In 1663 Charles II. obtained, as a part of the dower of his wife, the Infanta of Portugal, the island of Bombay, and, finding it expensive rather than profitable, he ceded the island to the company in the year 1668. Soon after he made a similar grant of that convenient midway resting-place the island of St. Helena; and in other important matters the aid of his government was cordially given to the company—the more cordially, no doubt, because some of his ministers and favourites were shareholders and speculators, and personally interested with the merchants—not yet merchant-princes—of Leadenhall-street.

In 1687 the company transferred from Surat to Bombay the presidency over all their settlements, and from that moment the town began to spread and increase very rapidly. The English were anxious to have possession of the neighbouring island of Salsette, and maintained that it was included in the dower with Bombay; but the Portuguese took a different reading of the marriage treaty, and kept Salsette.*

Trade was now carried on with a great part of the Indian empire through establishments both on the eastern and western coast; but the intercourse was liable to interruptions, and the forts and factories were not unfrequently threatened with hostile attack by the native powers, urged on in most cases by the Portuguese or by the Dutch. The weakness, the dissensions, and not unfrequent wars among the natives, encouraged the English settlers to abandon the merely defensive, and act on the offensive. The factors in Bengal transmitted to the company a list of wrongs and injuries sustained from the petty native rulers, and warmly recommended an active campaign against them beyond the limits of the company's settlements, which must become untenable or useless if allowed to be beleaguered and blocked up by the Indians. As the company had the power of war or peace with the Infidels, they sent out, in 1686, a Captain Nicholson with ten armed vessels and six companies of soldiers to levy war against the Great Mogul and the Nabob of Bengal. This force, the first employed in the intent of establishing political and military power, was diminutive indeed; but the unwarlike habits and the undisciplined

* Bruce, Annals of the East India Company.—Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.

condition of the natives were taken into account.* The ships composing the little armament arrived separately, and did not act with proper concert. The object of the campaign was to seize and fortify Chittagong. The fleet sailed up the Hooghly and commenced a cannonade, but they were repulsed and obliged to seek shelter near Calcutta, where they lay till some agreement with the nabob, or additional forces from England, should enable them to resume their stations. A hollow truce was agreed to by the nabob, who employed the time thus gained in making warlike preparations. As soon as he was ready the English were attacked by an immense host; but, under the direction of Charnock, the company's agent, they made a gallant defence, repulsed repeated assaults, stormed the fort of Tanna, seized the island of Ingellee, in which they fortified themselves, and burnt the town of Ballasore, with forty sail of the Mogul fleet. But on the other hand the nabob took and plundered the English factories at Patna and Cossimbuzar. And the campaign ended, not in any great conquest, but in an accommodation neither very honourable nor very reliable for the company. The court of directors, disappointed and irritated, sent Sir John Child, the governor of Bombay, to take the command over the head of Charnock, with instructions to re-establish, if possible, the factories at Patna and Cossimbuzar. Some of the company's servants were carrying on pacific negotiations with the natives, when Captain Heath arrived from England with a large ship and a frigate, and, without the necessary forms, commenced hostilities by plundering one or two native towns. After this work he proceeded to Chittagong, and was there foiled and defeated, as Captain Nicholson had been before him. Heath then taking the company's servants and effects on board, sailed away for Madras; and Bengal, upon which large sums had been spent, was abandoned. The emperor now reigning was the celebrated Aurengzebe, the most powerful of all the Mogul sovereigns, who had dethroned his father, and triumphed over his brothers who contested the empire with him.* Aurengzebe, though previously well disposed towards the English, was indignant at their last proceedings, and issued orders for expelling them from his dominions. The factory at Surat was seized, the island of Bombay was surrounded by a fleet, and the English governor cooped up in the town and castle. The factory at Masulipatam was seized, as was also the factory at Visigapatam, where the company's agent and several of their servants were put to death. But the Mogul treasury soon felt the want of the copious streams that flowed into it through the English factories; and Aurengzebe and his ministers, flattered, by the recent display of weakness, into the belief that the company would never be strong enough to be dangerous, made a return towards their old friendly feeling, and listened to negotiations which were proposed in a most humble, if not abject tone. After some time the English obtained an order for the restoration of Bombay and their factory at Surat. But during these premature contests with the natives, the most able and powerful of their European enemies had contrived to get a footing in India: the French had formed an establishment at Pondicherry, and were now employing themselves in fortifying that place and in establishing a close connexion with such of the natives as were most unfriendly to the English.

These proceedings quickened the desire of obtaining an extension of territory and a real dominion by treaty, by purchase, or by force of arms, but to be at all events independent of the Great Mogul, nabobs, and all other powers. "The truth is," says one of the greatest authorities in Indian affairs, "that, from the day on which

* Sir John Malcolm, Sketch of the Political History of India.

* Aurengzebe had revived and extended the Mogul power, which seemed falling to ruin under his father Shah Jehan. He had taken the cities of Hyderabad, Bejapore, and Golconda, and had extended his dominions nearly to the limits of the Carnatic. But it was during his brilliant reign that a new enemy took the field. This was Sevajee, the founder of the Mahratta empire, who, with the most warlike of the Hindus, overran and permanently occupied the far greater part of the Deccan.

Bombay. From a View in the Library of the East India Company.

No. 2.

the company's troops marched one mile from their factories, the increase of their territories and their armies became a principle of self-preservation; and at the end of every one of those numerous contests in which they were involved by the jealousy, avarice, or ambition of their neighbours, or the rapacity or ambition of their own servants, they were forced to adopt measures for improving their strength; which soon appeared to be the only mode by which they could avert the occurrence of similar danger."* In 1689 the directors broadly laid down the principle that independence was to be established and dominion acquired in India. "The increase of our revenue," said they, "is the subject of our care, as much as our trade: 'tis that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; 'tis that must make us a nation in India."† And just at this time their policy was to some extent gratified, for Tegnapatam, a town and port a little to the south of the French settlement of Pondicherry, was obtained by purchase, and secured by grant from the native powers. The servants of the company forthwith erected walls and bulwarks, and changed the name of the place to Fort St. David. After this acquisition the company pursued their plan of dominion with increased confidence, and soon after they may be said to have commenced a system of political ascendancy. About nine years after the purchase of Tegnapatam they were enabled to make a more important acquisition. Aurengzebe had appointed his son Azim Ooshaun to be viceroy of Bengal, and this Azim aspired to dethrone his father, as Aurengzebe had dethroned his; or, if he were content to leave his sire on the throne until his natural death, Azim was anxious to secure the succession to it, which was sure to be disputed, in the Oriental fashion, by a number of brothers, of whom some were younger and some older than himself. His grand scheme required money and arms, and the company could promise both for valuable considerations. For a large sum, Azim Ooshaun sold to the company the zemindarships of Chutanutty, Govindpore, and Calcutta. At the last-named place the English began, but not without some timidity and circumspection, to erect Fort William. Nine years after this, in 1707, when the fort was strong and considerable, and a town had risen under its protecting shadow, the company made Calcutta the seat of a presidency, and the place gradually began to rise to the dignity of a capital to the British empire in the East.

In the meanwhile many merchants and traders at home had become jealous of the strict monopoly of the chartered company, and various attempts were made by men called "interlopers" to carry on a trade with India in despite of the company and its local agents. Some interlopers there had always been, and, as early as the year 1600, the court of directors had ordered that they should be seized and treated as smugglers, or, in some cases, as *pirates*. In 1691 the court of directors granted commissions to all their captains proceeding to India to seize interlopers of every description, and bring them to trial before the Admiralty Court at Bombay—"explaining that, as they attributed all the differences between the company and the Indian powers to the interlopers, if they continued their depredations on the subjects of the Mogul or King of Persia, they were to be tried for their lives as pirates, and sentence of death passed; but execution stayed till the king's pleasure should be known." "This proceeding of the court," says a warm advocate, "rested upon the opinion of the twelve judges, which was, that the company had a right to the trade to the East Indies, according to their charter."* But the authority of parliament had never confirmed the kingly grant by charter of such extensive powers of judicature; and the principles thus avowed, having in many instances been vigorously and barbarously acted upon by the company's agents and lawgivers in India, had greatly increased the prevailing jealousy. The House of Commons in 1693 adopted the resolution that *parliament* should deter-

* Sir John Malcolm, Sketch of the Political History of India.

† Id.

* Bruce, Annals of the East India Company.

mine whatever regulations might be deemed necessary for the Indian trade. Nevertheless, a new charter was that year granted by Queen Mary, in the absence of her husband William III., by letters patent from the crown, and the interlopers were subjected to the same rigorous treatment as formerly. The House of Commons then resolved "That it was the right of all Englishmen to trade to the East Indies or any part of the world, unless prohibited by *act of parliament*." William III. deferred to this decision, which had been brought about by a temporary union between the discontented Whigs and the Jacobites. In 1695 the House of Commons ordered the books of the company to be examined, and detected several flagrant abuses in the conduct of their affairs, and many palpable proofs of their having bribed some ministers of William in order to obtain their charter and the connivance of government. It was found, for example, that since the Revolution of 1688 the home expenses of the company had increased from 1200*l.* per annum to 90,000*l.* Much of this money had been paid at various times to members of the House of Commons, who appeared to have kept part for themselves and to have paid part to ministers. Thus Danby, Duke of Leeds and Lord President of William's council, had received 5000 guineas; and other sums, including 10,000*l.* to the king himself, had been paid in various directions, for assurances of support against interlopers, the establishment of a rival company, &c. The Duke of Leeds was impeached by the Commons, but the king quashed proceedings by a sudden prorogation of parliament.* The interlopers, including many men who had abundance of money, and who were quite as ready to use it in bribing the representatives and ministers of the country as were the chartered directors in Leadenhall-street, continued their earnest endeavours, which were now directed not merely to obtain a share in the benefits of the India trade, but a strict monopoly of it to their own sole advantage and to the exclusion of the old company and all others, whether individual traders or bodies corporate. And they gained so much strength by bribing and out-bidding that, in 1698, they were enabled to bring the company's charter under the cognizance of parliament and to get it set aside for one in their own favour. The charter was in fact knocked down to the highest bidder; and, in consideration of an advance of 2,000,000*l.* sterling, at 8*l.* per cent., these interlopers obtained, not by royal charter, but by parliamentary bill, the exclusive right of trade with the East Indies, in spite of the protests of the old company, that the infringement of charters was contrary to good faith, contrary to justice, and as imprudent as immoral; that they had property of which they could not be deprived without the violation of the very foundation on which all civil society rests; that they were the lords proprietors by royal grant of Bombay and St. Helena; that they had acquired in India, at their own expense and by their own exertions, much immoveable property in lands, houses, forts, factories, &c.; that they had purchased privileges of the natives, and had, in fact, established a system through which alone England could hope to preserve the India trade: that justice to individuals as well as to the public required the continuance of their charter, inasmuch as the property and even subsistence of many families, widows, and orphans were entirely dependent on the fate of the company. So much attention was paid to these strong representations, that the Old or London Company obtained a confirmation of their charter in the following season, and the nation had thus *two* East India companies instead of one—the Old by charter and royal prerogative, the New by bill and authority of parliament. "Nothing," says Malcolm, "could be more violent than the contests of these companies during the short period that they continued separate. The great efforts of both were directed to the object of gaining power in the House of Commons; and in the general elections of the year 1700 each was detected in bribery and corruption. The Old Company corrupted members and purchased votes; the New Company purchased seats. Thus the one bribed the representatives, the other the constituents.

* See Pictorial Hist. of England, vol. iv. pp. 51, 52, 53.

But, tired out at length with a struggle which threatened ruin to both, they united their stock under the charter granted to the Old Company, and bearing date the 5th of September, 1698, and assumed that name under which they have ever since been incorporated—"THE UNITED EAST INDIA COMPANY."*

It however required some time to remove their rooted animosities and establish a feeling of common interest. But at length, in the year 1708, a new and more favourable bill was obtained from parliament, and their privileges were both extended and consolidated in return for a fresh loan to government. Some of the leaders and servants of the Old Company had never lowered their tone in all their troubles. For example, their governor at Leadenhall-street, writing to an officer who had been appointed judge of civil affairs in India, had thus expressed himself even in a season of depression and discomfiture—"I expect my will and orders shall be your rule, and not the laws of England, which are a heap of nonsense, compiled by a number of country-gentlemen, who hardly know how to govern their own families, much less how to regulate companies and foreign commerce. Having now the power of condemning the company's enemies, or such as shall be deemed so, particularly those that shall question the company's power over all the British subjects in India, I expect my orders from time to time shall be obeyed and received as statute laws."*

* Sketch of Polit. Hist. of India.

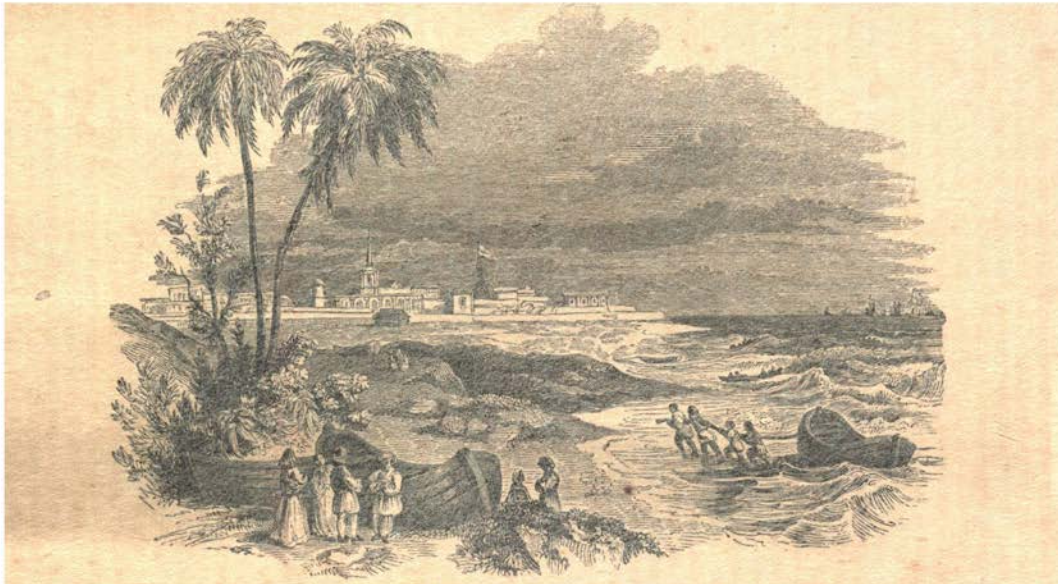
* Extract, as given by Sir John Malcolm.

## CHAPTER II.

### RAPID DECLINE OF THE MOGUL EMPIRE.

THE union of the clashing interests of the two companies, the gradual accordance of their principles and of the views of their servants abroad, the tranquillity and commercial prosperity which the peace of Utrecht, dishonourable as it was to the Tory government of Queen Anne, indisputably brought to England, and to the greater part of Europe, all contributed to raise the value of the British settlements in the East, and to encourage the company in seeking an extension of dominion; for still all that was really occupied in sovereignty was a strip of land on the coast and an island here and there. The disseverance of the Mogul empire, which began with the death of Aurengzebe in 1707, seemed to offer an opening to their ambition. After a very short reign of Shah Alum, the four sons of that emperor contended for the throne, and during this horrible family war the Mahrattas extended their conquests in the south, the Rajpoots virtually established their independence, and the Sikhs, a remarkable sect who professed a pure theism and attempted to reconcile the religion of the Mussulmans with that of the Hindus, ravaged the provinces of Delhi and Lahore. Moez-eddin, who triumphed over his brothers, was dethroned at the end of a few months by his nephew Farrukhsir or Feroksir, who did not occupy the throne quite seven years. Under his successor, Mohammed Shah, the empire of the Moguls was wasted to a shadow: the Deccan was alienated under the rule of the Nizam-al-Mulk, by name a viceroy, but in fact an independent sovereign, more powerful than the Great Mogul: the Rohillas, a fierce predatory people of the Afghan race, seized on the northern provinces; and (in 1739) the Persians under Nadir Shah penetrated to Delhi and massacred alike Mohammedans and Hindus.

The company were signally indebted in various stages of their progress to humble practitioners in medicine. It was in consequence of a cure effected on the favourite daughter of one emperor that they had been first allowed a footing in Bengal; and in the year 1715 a medical man named Hamilton, who accompanied a commercial mission to Delhi, obtained for the company a grant of three villages near Madras, with permission to purchase thirty-seven additional townships in Bengal, as a reward for curing the reigning Emperor Feroksir of a dangerous and painful illness, which was beyond the reach of the skill of the native physicians or conjurers. By the hostility of the nabob the company were for a long time prevented from purchasing the villages and townships; but they were allowed to enjoy another grant obtained through Hamilton from the grateful emperor—namely, the privilege of introducing and conveying their goods from Calcutta through Bengal without duty or search. In a very short time the trade of the company was wonderfully benefited by this privilege. But the French East India Company, who had made Pondicherry their stronghold, now began to thwart some of their plans, and to excite their jealousy by an increasing trade. In 1742, when a war between England and France appeared to be imminent in spite of the pacific temper of the great English minister, Sir Robert Walpole, the French company, who were still in their infancy, and very anxious for the preservation of their profitable or promising trade, proposed to the English company, that, what-



General View of Madras. From a Drawing by Thomas Daniell.

No. 3.

ever might happen in Europe, there should be peace between them in India. The English court of directors at first accepted and then rejected this proposed neutrality, instructing their officers in India to watch, and, if possible, to circumvent the treaties and intrigues of the French company with the natives. In 1744 Walpole was driven from the helm, and the war, which broke out between the French and English, rapidly spread to Hindustan, and some few of the best officers in the French service repaired thither in the hope of attacking the English settlements before they should be prepared for defence. Labourdonnais, who had risen from a subordinate rank in the navy to be governor of the Mauritius and Bourbon, by forcibly detaining all the French vessels that touched at those islands, and by training the merchant sailors to the use of the gun, got together a warlike squadron, and with all possible secrecy stretched across the Indian Ocean. He was well acquainted with the coasts, and with most of the European settlements, having previously made three or four voyages to that part of the world. His bravery was equal to his skill, and he resolved to begin his operations with an attack on Madras. He had with him a most motley crew and army of Frenchmen, Caffres, blacks from Madagascar, and negro slaves from the Mauritius, to which he had added, at Pondicherry, about 400 sepoys. The total amount was about 3600. The English in the colony of Madras did not exceed 300 men, of whom about 200 were soldiers: the town and the adjoining territory belonging to the company had already a population of about 250,000, counting Armenians, Mohammedans, Hindus, Parsees, and Indian Christians, the converts or half-caste descendants of the Portuguese; but none of these classes could be depended upon in war. The 300 English occupied Fort St. George, which was surrounded with a weak wall, and defended by bastions and four batteries, weak and badly constructed. About the middle of September Labourdonnais appeared off the town, and immediately commenced a bombardment. The inhabitants endeavoured to save the place by offering him a ransom; but he was anxious for the glory of planting the French colours on Fort St. George, and continued to bombard for five days, at the end of which the inhabitants, and the English garrison as well, capitulated. Labourdonnais had not lost a man, and the English had lost no more than four or five. By the terms of the capitulation he pledged himself upon his honour to restore Madras to the English company on payment of a fixed ransom. On entering the place he protected the persons, houses, and property of the inhabitants; but he took possession of the magazines and warehouses of the company, all situated within Fort St. George, as public property. In his instructions from the French court, Labourdonnais was expressly prohibited from occupying any establishment or factory of the enemy; whence it has been argued that the French government and French East India Company shrunk at this time from all idea of conquest in India. But if this was the case, and it seems to us extremely doubtful, M. Dupleix, the governor of Pondicherry, was resolved not to abide by any such plan, having previously formed in his own mind a system of universal conquest in that great peninsula; and the first object, and that which he had most at heart, was to drive the last remnant of the English from the coast of Coromandel. Dupleix, who had wished for the sole conduct of the war, considered Labourdonnais as an intruder and rival. Now, however, he insisted that Labourdonnais should break the conditions of the treaty of capitulation and keep possession of Madras. The brave sailor was averse to a proceeding which would have been both a breach of faith and honour, and a breach of orders; but he was compelled by the storms of the monsoon, which drove his ships out to sea, and sank two of them with their crews, to demand from the English that the articles should be so far altered as to allow him longer time to remove the company's goods; and the period of evacuation was changed from the 15th of October to the 15th of January. This was what Dupleix desired, for he proposed, upon the departure of Labourdonnais, to take possession of Madras himself without any attention to the arti-

cles of the capitulation. Leaving part of his force in Fort St. George, Labourdonnais repaired to Pondicherry as soon as the weather would permit, and proposed several plans, to none of which his rival would agree. After many quarrels he took his departure for France, to answer the accusations of his enemies, and to procure a patronage in the French cabinet and East India Company that should enable him to return with credit and power to India. On his voyage he was taken prisoner by a British ship-of-war, which brought him to England. As it was considered that he had behaved like a man of honour and humanity, in the capture of Madras, he was received with favour and distinction by all ranks, and a director of the East India Company offered to become security for him with his person and property. But the British government, then presided over by the Duke of Newcastle, desired no security beyond the word of Labourdonnais, and permitted his immediate return to France. It would have been better for him if they had kept him in England, for, upon the representations of Dupleix, he was arrested without process and thrown into the Bastille, where he pined for three long years.*

Labourdonnais had scarcely quitted Madras, when the Nabob of Arcot sent his son with a numerous army to drive the French out of that place. The force which Labourdonnais had left behind him in Fort St. George exceeded 1200 men, nearly all native French, and well trained and disciplined. The Indians were astonished and panic-stricken by the rapidity of their artillery; and after a very short struggle the nabob's son fled with all his host. Dupleix, backed by a remonstrance and prayer signed by all the French in Pondicherry, declared Labourdonnais's treaty of ransom annulled, and ordered the officers at Madras to seize every article of property there, private or public, native or English, except clothes, furniture, and the jewels and trinkets of the women. These orders were executed without compunction; and the English governor and some of the principal inhabitants were carried prisoners to Pondicherry, and exhibited there in a kind of triumph. Dupleix then turned his attention to Fort St. David, situated only twelve miles south from Pondicherry, and having in its immediate neighbourhood the Indian town of Cuddalore and two or three populous villages, all under the dominion of the English company. On the night of the 19th of December (1746) the Frenchman quitted Pondicherry with 1700 men, Europeans, natives, and Caffres, and he arrived next morning under Fort St. David, wherein there were only about 200 Europeans and 100 Topasses. The French had already begun to train the native sepoys to European discipline, but the English had delayed following the example,* and had no disciplined troops of that sort. They had, however, hired about 2000 of the undisciplined bands of the country, most irregularly armed with swords and targets, bows and arrows, pikes and lances, old matchlocks or new English muskets; and they had placed about half of this force in Cuddalore, which was partly surrounded by water and partly by walls flanked by bastions. As for Fort St. David, it was small, but much stronger than Fort St. George. The French, however, took up an advantageous post, and were making sure of the capture and plunder of both places, when a large native army appeared on their right flank and induced them to make a sudden and rather disastrous retreat, leaving (without counting their Indians or Africans) above 100 in killed and wounded behind them. This relieving army had been sent by the Nabob of Arcot, instigated by wrath against the French for the defeat of his son at Madras, and captivated with the liberality of the English, who had promised him large sums. But the nearness of the place to Pondicherry tempted the French to make fresh efforts. On the night of the 10th of January, 1747, Dupleix embarked 500 men in boats to take Cuddalore by surprise. But the wind and the surf compelled the Frenchman to return to Pondicherry without doing any-

* Mill, Hist. of Brit. India, and the French and other documents quoted therein. Labourdonnais died shortly after his liberation from the Bastille.

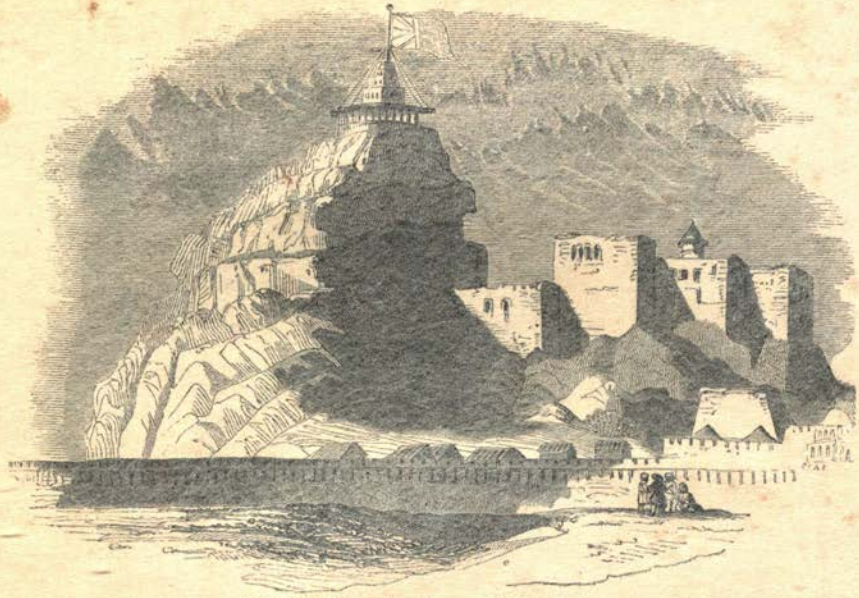
* Mill.

thing. Dupleix then sent a strong detachment from Madras to ravage the nabob's territory. The French troops acted in a barbarous manner, and caused still more terror than mischief. Shortly after four French ships arrived at Pondicherry, and Dupleix artfully represented that he was speedily to be reinforced to an immense extent. The nabob began to waver; he saw that the English were but a handful of men, and he decided, with Eastern facility, to change sides and join the stronger: he concluded peace with the French, recalled the army he had sent to the English, and dispatched his son on a visit to Pondicherry, where Dupleix got up a fresh show and triumph. About the middle of March of the same year, 1747, Dupleix again sent his forces to capture Cuddalore and Fort St. David; but the Frenchmen had scarcely taken up their position when an English squadron, under Admiral Griffin, approached the road and scared them back to Pondicherry. While they were retreating precipitately to Pondicherry the admiral landed 100 Englishmen, 200 Topasses, and 500 natives, from Bombay and Tellicherry.* Dupleix now apprehended an attack by the English on his own headquarters; and, to save his ships, he sent them away to Mauritius to wait there till they should be joined by a fresh squadron from France. In the month of January, 1748, Major Laurence, an officer of great merit, arrived at Fort St. David with a commission to command the whole of the company's forces in India. He had not been there long ere Dupleix attempted another night attack on Cuddalore. Laurence allowed the French to approach the very walls of the town, and even to apply their scaling ladders; but then, as they were fancying the garrison had been withdrawn, he met them in the teeth with artillery and musketry, and drove them away in disorder. Though England had then upon her hands a war with Spain, France, and Holland, and had only recently recovered from the civil war in the northern part of the island caused by the invasion of the Young Pretender, she dispatched nine ships of war under Admiral Boscawen, to co-operate with eleven ships of the company, carrying stores and troops. Boscawen arrived at Fort St. David on the 9th of August, and, joining Admiral Griffin, found himself at the head of the largest European force that any one power had as yet possessed in India. The land troops brought from England amounted to 1400 men. It was confidently hoped that the loss of Madras would speedily be revenged by the capture of Pondicherry; but the siege of the French Indian capital was undertaken without a sufficient knowledge of the localities, was conducted with little ability or spirit, and was raised when the trenches had been opened for thirty-one days. Dupleix, who was no hero—who always carefully kept himself at a distance from shot, alleging "that the noise of arms interrupted his reflections,"*—made a loud boast of the event, and represented it as one of the most brilliant victories upon record. He wrote letters in this strain to the Indian princes and to the Great Mogul himself, and he received in return the compliments of those who would have changed sides again if the English had been successful. The French were regarded by the natives as a superior people; but before they could avail themselves of their prestige, peace was concluded in Europe between England and France, and hostilities were suspended in India.

During the war the native viceroy of Bengal had maintained peace between the French and English settled in his dominions; but the trade of the English company was much injured by the incursions of the Mahrattas, who interrupted communications, and on one occasion carried off 300 bales of raw silk, the property of the company. The still growing dissensions, the wretched weakness and anarchy of the whole country, soon encouraged the English to persevere in their old scheme of territorial aggrandisement. Sahujee, a Hindu prince, who, in the rapid revolutions of that country, had gained

* The Topasses, whose name frequently occurs in the history of our early Indian wars, were native Christians, the converts or half-caste descendants of the Portuguese.

* Mémoire pour M. Dupleix, as cited in Mill's Hist. Brit. India.' But, though no hero himself, Dupleix had heroes under him.



Rock of Trichinopoly. From an Original Drawing.

No. 4.

and lost the throne of Tanjore, repaired to Fort St. David and entreated the assistance of the English in a war against his brother, Pretaupa Sing, who had dethroned him. As the price of this assistance Sahujee offered the fort and country of Devi-Cottah, advantageously situated by the banks of the Coleroon on the coast of Coromandel. In the beginning of April, 1749, 430 Englishmen and about 1000 sepoys marched from Fort St. David into Tanjore, and, as a natural beginning to the war, directed their first attacks against the fortress, which was to be ceded to the company. But Devi-Cottah was stronger than was expected; the small train of artillery they carried with them proved insufficient; they were disappointed in the co-operation of an English squadron and of the people of the country, which had both been promised them; and they marched back to Fort St. David foiled and humiliated. The impatience of Sahujee to recover his throne, and their own eager appetite for territory and dominion, soon induced the English to renew their attempt. A new expedition was fitted out at Fort St. David, the troops were landed, a breach was made in the walls of Devi-Cottah, the deep river Coleroon was crossed by means of a raft, and the place was stormed. After some hard fighting in the breach and on the ramparts behind it a truce was concluded, the reigning king of Tanjore, Pretaupa Sing, agreeing to yield to the English the town, fort, and harbour, together with a territory adjoining; and the English on their part agreeing, not merely to renounce the support of Sahujee, for whom and with whom they had entered on this war, but also to secure his person in order to prevent his giving any further molestation to his brother.* It is even said, that, but for the rough yet humane sailor, Boscawen, the English would have delivered up their ally to Pretaupa Sing, who, according to the practice of the country, would have quieted his rivalry for ever by steel or poison. Thus, in profiting by the vices of the natives, the officers of the company did not hesitate in imitating those vices, and profiting by bad faith.

At the siege of Devi-Cottah, Robert Clive, who was eventually to be the real founder of the British empire in India, greatly distinguished himself; but in heading the storming party he narrowly escaped being cut down by the sabre of a Tanjore horseman, one of a large party of cavalry who issued from a projecting tower and attacked the assailants in the rear. Clive, who had attracted some attention in the preceding year at the siege of Pondicherry, had entered the company's service in a civil capacity, but he had very soon thrown down the pen of a writer to take up an ensign's sword. By this time he had attained the rank of lieutenant, and was esteemed by the whole army as the most enterprising and daring of their officers. He was in the twenty-fourth year of his age, poor, and, comparatively, friendless and illiterate, and his chances of patronage, fame, and fortune all lay in his sword.*

However foully obtained, the possession of Devi-Cottah was of vast importance to the company: the channel of the river Coleroon under that town was capable of receiving ships of the largest burthen,† and this was the more important, as all along that coast from Masulipatam to Cape Comorin there was not a single port that could receive a vessel of 300 tons: moreover the neighbouring country was rich and fertile, and the strip of territory ceded by the treaty one of the most fertile spots on the coast.

But while these events were in progress the French, whose policy and operations continued to be guided by Dupleix, were engaged in transactions of the highest moment, and taking part in a great revolution in the Carnatic, a large tract of country extending from the river Kistna to the northern branch of the Cauvery. The succession to the Carnatic was disputed by a number of princes, and Dupleix conceived that by siding with the

* Orme, History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan. Mill, Hist. of British India.

* Sir John Malcolm, Life of Robert Lord Clive; collected from the family papers, communicated by the Earl of Powis.

† There was a sand-bank or bar near the mouth of the river; but it was calculated that this could easily be removed.

strongest of the claimants, Chunda Saheb, who had collected a large army, and was eagerly courting French assistance, he might obtain not only vast cessions of territory, but by degrees a complete ascendancy in the whole of southern India. In addition to the armed disputes for the great succession, there were contentions equally fierce among the minor princes for the possession of other dominions, some bordering on the Carnatic, and some included in it. A body of 400 French soldiers and 2000 sepoys was sent by Dupleix from Pondicherry; and in the first battle fought with these allies Chunda Saheb saw the most powerful of his rivals killed by a ball fired by a Caffre soldier in the service of France. Mohammed Ali, son to the fallen nabob, fled to Trichinopoly, a strong city, and the conquerors marched to Arcot, which surrendered at the first summons. From Trichinopoly Mohammed Ali dispatched envoys to the English to solicit their succour, and to promise the highest of prices for their alliance; but the British officers in command had received no orders from home that could justify their embarking upon a scene of such extensive operations; they were few in number, and their whole European force only a few companies; and, moreover, they were occupied at the time in taking possession anew of Madras, which had been given up by the French, in compliance with the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Dupleix recommended his Indian allies to proceed immediately to Trichinopoly in order to reduce that place and kill or capture Mohammed Ali before the English should take up arms for him; but Chunda Saheb preferred going to levy tribute from the sovereign of Tanjore, who had so recently surrendered Devi-Cottah to the English. The Rajah of Tanjore was compelled to give to the French two lacs of rupees and eighty-one villages belonging to Karical, which place the French had seized in 1736, and built a fort there.*

In the neighbouring regions of the Deccan—the great and populous country which had formerly held dominion over the whole of the Carnatic—the succession on the death of the Nizam-al-Mulk, in 1748, had been disputed between his son Nazir Jung, and his grandson Muzuffer Jung; but the senior prince had prevailed over the junior, had taken Muzuffer Jung prisoner, and now kept him in irons, carrying him in his train wherever he went. Nazir Jung and Anwar-ud-Dien, who claimed the sovereignty of the Carnatic, having united their forces, and drawn into their service nearly all the troops the Great Mogul had on foot, advanced to the Carnatic frontier with an enormous army, including 30,000 Mahrattas engaged to act as light cavalry. At the approach of this host Chunda Saheb and his French allies retreated hastily to Pondicherry. Dupleix by extraordinary exertions increased the French contingent to 2000 men, and added a large body of well-disciplined sepoys, together with a well-served train of artillery. In the mean time the English had managed to send some very small detachments to Trichinopoly to sustain Mohammed Ali, and had thrown a few companies into the army of the Rajah of Tanjore. Major Laurence advanced from Fort St. David with reinforcements, and collecting the companies in Tanjore he was enabled to join the army of Nazir Jung with about 600 Englishmen. But Laurence had with difficulty obtained the consent of his civil superiors to this active co-operation, and he was for some time disturbed by a doubt whether he should be justified in fighting the French without orders from the British government. He, however, determined to imitate the French in representing the English as mere auxiliaries and not principals in the war. As Laurence advanced with Nazir Jung's host, the French and their allies strongly entrenched themselves, and waited the attack with full confidence of success. Their position was so excellent, that Laurence advised Nazir Jung against an attack; but the Indian said that it did not become the son of the Nizam-al-Mulk to retreat before such an enemy. A cannonade was therefore begun and the troops were put in motion for a closer attack. At this crisis the French corps was completely disorganized by the sudden resignation of thirteen commissioned officers, who were

* Sir John Malcolm, Life of Lord Clive.

enraged at not having shared in the booty and spoils made in Tanjore. As the defection seemed growing general, M. d'Auteuil, who commanded for Dupleix, deemed it expedient to quit the field and hasten back to Pondicherry. Chunda Saheb, whose own troops began to desert, saw nothing better to do than to march after d'Auteuil. The whole excellent position was soon abandoned without a blow, or a shot fired from it; and for a moment the triumph of the allies of the English appeared to be fully secured. But Nazir Jung, the real head of this confederacy, had little ability and still less energy, and, by refusing to grant to his English allies a territory near Madras which had been promised as the reward of their co-operation, he provoked Major Laurence to return to Fort St. David with his 600 men. Nor had Dupleix lost heart by his most unexpected misfortune: by various arts he pacified the mutinous French officers, and put a new spirit into their little army; and he opened a secret correspondence with some disaffected chiefs, the leaders of the Patan troops, in the army of his enemy Nazir Jung. These Patans were unprincipled and ferocious mercenaries, ever ready to sell their services to the highest bidder, or to betray their trust for money. Responding to the overtures of Dupleix, the Patan chiefs engaged to perform various important services, and if necessary to murder their present employer Nazir Jung. D'Auteuil again took the field, and one of his officers with only 300 men was allowed to penetrate by night into the very heart of the enemy's camp, and to kill upwards of a thousand without losing more than two or three of his own people. Moreover, another small body of French troops sailed to Masulipatam, attacked it by surprise in the night, and carried it with a trifling loss; and another detachment seized the pagoda of Travadi, only fifteen miles to the west of Fort St. David. Continuing this career, M. Bussy, the Clive of the French, captured by storm the hill fort of Gingee, which had been deemed impregnable and inaccessible. The event struck awe into the natives of India, and was viewed with astonishment even by Europeans. "It had not yet been discovered," says Malcolm, "as it has since been by frequent similar successes in India, that where men rely upon steep and high mountains and rugged or scarped rocks as defences, other means and advantages are neglected; and if the assailants overcome those natural obstacles which have been deemed insuperable the spirit of the defenders is gone, and they seldom if ever offer that bold and determined resistance which the same troops have been found to do in half-walled towns or villages, where, from the first, they could confide in nothing but their own firmness and courage." Soon after the storming of Gingee, Nazir Jung opened, or renewed, a correspondence with Dupleix. The wily Frenchman replied to his letters in a friendly manner, and drew up a treaty of pacification which he professed would satisfy himself and his allies and restore the blessings of peace to the Carnatic, the unfortunate inhabitants of which country had suffered nearly every extremity of misery from this and preceding wars. But at the same time Dupleix had fully arranged a revolt in Nazir Jung's camp, and had collected, under the high hill of Gingee, a force of 4000 men, French or well-disciplined sepoys, who were to obey the summons of the Patan traitors, and to co-operate with them. The doomed subahdar signed the treaty as sent to him by Dupleix, and returned it to the head-quarters of the French; but at the same moment, or shortly before the arrival of the peace-restoring document, there arrived in the same camp the concerted summons of the Patan conspirators; and the French force under the command of M. Delatouche silently moved off to attack under cover of night the betrayed army of Nazir Jung. Delatouche encountered some resistance from the rest of the army, but the Patan mercenaries remained passive spectators. Nazir Jung mounted his war elephant and hastened to the lines of the Patan chiefs, ignorant of their treachery and hoping to excite them to exertion; but as he raised himself on the seat of his elephant to salute those ferocious chiefs, two carabine balls were fired at his heart, and he fell dead at the feet of the traitors, who forthwith cut off his head, stuck it upon a

spear, and exhibited it to the army. This was quite enough to effect an instantaneous revolution: Muzuffer Jung, the ally of the French and of Chunda Saheb, was released from his confinement in the camp and installed as Subahdar of the Deccan, although there were four brothers of the murdered Nazir Jung on the spot.*

Muzuffer Jung, who had so rapidly passed from a prison to a throne, hastened to Pondicherry to express his gratitude for the friendship and his admiration of the policy and decision of Dupleix. As substantial proofs of his thankfulness, he lavished upon the Frenchman a great part of the treasures of Nazir Jung, and nominated him governor of all the Mogul dominions on the coast of Coromandel from the river Kistna to Cape Comorin; appointing his close ally Chunda Saheb his deputy in the government of Arcot. But the new Subahdar and Dupleix failed in satisfying the cupidity of the Patan chiefs, who departed for the interior full of rancour and revenge. Mohammed Ali, late the ally of the English, sustained himself within the strong walls of Trichinopoly till the assassination of Nazir Jung and the union of the Great Mogul's army with the French; but now he fled, and offered to resign all claim to the Carnatic, provided Dupleix would obtain for him from the new Subahdar of his own making a separate command in some other part of the Deccan. In the beginning of the year 1751 it was found necessary to attend to insurrections which had broken out—not without encouragement from the English or the native friends of the company—in various parts of the Carnatic; and the new Subahdar took the field accompanied by the French contingent, again under the command of the brave and skilful Bussy. On their march into the interior a revolt broke out in part of their own army; and it was discovered that a mountain-pass in their front was occupied by the fierce Patan chiefs with their hardy tribes. Bussy gave instant orders for clearing the pass, and this was soon done by the French artillery and grape-shot. But in pursuing th fugitive Patans the new Subahdar received a Patan arrow in his brain, which proved as instantaneously fatal to him as the carabines had been to his predecessor. The native army hereupon would have packed up their rice-kettles to disband and to return to their homes; but Bussy instantly proclaimed a new Subahdar in the person of Salabut Jung, who happened to be in the camp. There was also with the army at the same time a son of the arrow-slain Muzuffer Jung; but he was a mere child, and no attention was ever paid in India or in any other of the eastern despotisms to hereditary right, or to any other fixed rule of succession. The native army received Salabut Jung with acclamations of great joy; and he forthwith confirmed to the French the splendid grants made by his predecessor. The army then continued its march to Hyderabad, one of the French officers informing Dupleix by letter that in a very short time the Mogul would tremble on his throne at the name of the French. The council of the English company were thrown into consternation, and almost into despair, by the sudden ascendancy acquired by Dupleix, and they endeavoured to encourage Mohammed Ali, and induce him to break off his negotiations, by which Trichinopoly was to have been surrendered to the French. Mohammed Ali had courage enough left to return to Trichinopoly, and to declare that he would hold that important place to the last extremity; and hereupon the English pledged themselves to support and assist him with ships, troops, and money. But small was the force that the government of Fort St. David could collect for this purpose; and, as Major Laurence had taken his departure for England, they were at a loss to know what officer they should appoint to the command of it. As Lieutenant Clive seemed too young and too low in rank, they at last gave the chief command to one Captain Cope, who might have been of the same stock as Sir John Cope, the hero of

* Colonel Wilkes. Dupleix, to cast off the infamy of treachery, asserts in his Memoirs, that, on receiving the treaty signed by Nazir Jung, he wrote off immediately to Delatouche to prevent further hostilities, but that his letter arrived too late. There may be some doubt as to these assertions, but we believe there is none as to the fact of M. Delatouche being *ignorant* of the conclusion of the treaty when he obeyed the summons of the Patan chiefs.

Preston-pans. With 600 men in all, including sepoys, Captain Cope advanced to Madura, which still adhered to Mohammed Ali; but he marched back again without striking a blow for his ally, who thereupon was speedily besieged in Trichinopoly by the French and the forces under Chunda Saheb. As Trichinopoly, on the south bank of the great river Cauvery, was a place of vital importance—the only place that remained of all the Carnatic in the hands of their ally—and as the French were proving to them what they might expect in their ill-defended factories and settlements on the coast, by planting white flags in almost every field around their boundaries, and in some instances even within their limits, the presidency of Fort St. David were roused to greater exertions, and they collected 500 Europeans, 100 Caffres, and 1000 sepoys to march to the relief of the besieged city. This time the command was given not to Captain Cope, but to a Captain Gingen, who appears to have been as incompetent an officer, as weak and undecided, as Cope. Clive went with the expedition, but unfortunately merely as commissary of provisions. According to the absent Major Laurence, who afterwards wrote an account of these early and not very honourable operations, "a fatal spirit of division had crept in among our officers, so that many opportunities and advantages were lost, which gave the country alliance but an indifferent opinion of our military conduct." *

Gingen, about the beginning of April, 1751, started from Fort St. David, and at nearly the same time Chunda Saheb, leaving part of his forces in the neighbourhood of Trichinopoly, began to march to meet him. The opposing armies met near the fort of Volconda, and the English behaved in such manner as English troops have seldom been guilty of—they fled almost at the first shot, leaving their Caffres and their sepoys on the field engaged in an unequal struggle, which these mercenaries maintained for some time with considerable spirit. Gingen, who was calling councils of war and debating and wavering when he ought to have been fighting, retreated from position to position; but then, changing his line of march, he contrived eventually to reach Trichinopoly and throw himself and his forces, considerably reduced, within its walls. Chunda Saheb was close at his heels, and the siege was renewed. Clive, after the disgraceful affair at Volconda, had returned straight to Fort St. David to storm and swear at the misconduct of our officers, and to solicit employment more suited to his disposition and abilities. In a lucky hour the council promoted him to the rank of captain, adopted a plan which his daring genius had formed, and entrusted him with the execution of his own project. This was nothing less than to relieve Trichinopoly by making a sudden attack upon Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic. Fort St. David and Madras were emptied of their troops and left with the weakest garrisons, and yet Clive's detachment when completed did not exceed 200 Englishmen and 300 sepoys. His whole staff of officers counted no more than eight, six of whom had never been in action, and four of these six being young men in the mercantile service of the company, who, inflamed by Clive's example, took up the sword to follow him. The artillery attached to this force consisted of three light field-pieces. But Clive had learnt something while acting as commissary, and had taken good care to provide supplies of provisions and abundant ammunition. He had already the forethought of a great commander. On the 26th of August, 1751, he started from Madras with a confidence of success. On the 29th he reached a pagoda about forty miles inland, and there received intelligence that the fort of Arcot had not been drained of its troops for the siege of Trichinopoly, but was actually garrisoned by 1100 men. Nothing daunted, he wrote to Madras for two eighteen-pounders to be sent after him without delay; and continuing his march he halted on the 31st within ten miles of Arcot. The country people, or the scouts employed by the enemy, reported with consternation that they had seen the English marching without concern through a terrible storm of thunder, lightning, and rain. This was considered as a fearful omen by the

* Narrative in Cambridge's War in India.

native garrison, who instantly abandoned the fort. A few hours after their departure Clive and his men entered the city, which had no walls or defences, and, marching through the streets in the midst of tens of thousands of timid spectators, they took possession of the fort, where they found eight pieces of cannon from four to eight pounders, a great heap of lead for shot, and abundance of gunpowder. The merchants of Arcot had for security deposited their goods in the fort: Clive scrupulously respected this property, and allowed some three or four thousand persons to remain in their houses or dwellings which were situated within the fort. All this procured him many friends among the natives, who cared little for either of the parties contending for dominion over them; and it enabled him to obtain provisions and such materials as might be wanted to sustain a siege —for he could scarcely hope to be left with such a scanty force in undisturbed possession of his enemy's capital. But before the besiegers should gather around him from afar, this precocious and self-taught general resolved to scatter the ex-garrison of the fort, who lingered in the neighbourhood, and who might recover from their panic. On the 4th of September he marched out with the greater part of his men and four field-pieces; and he soon discovered 600 horse and 500 foot drawn up in battle array. They had a field-piece managed by two or three Europeans, from which they fired at a great distance. They killed a camel and wounded a sepoy; but as soon as the English got within musket-shot they fled to the hills in their rear. Clive then returned to the fort of Arcot.

On the 6th he made another excursion into the country, and found the enemy nearly at the same spot where he had found them before; but their number now appeared to be nearly doubled, and they had two field-pieces with them instead of one. Moreover, they had chosen their ground with some skill, in a grove enclosed with a bank and a ditch, and having in front an old tank almost dry and choked up. They fired their field-pieces smartly as Clive advanced, and killed three English soldiers. But the line with Clive at its head advanced more briskly, upon which the enemy, not thinking themselves safe in the grove, ran into the old tank, the banks of which were strong and high. Well under cover, they could scarcely be touched by the fire of the English line, and they were enabled to wound several of Clive's people. He therefore withdrew his troops to the rear of some buildings, and then detached a platoon to attack the tank on one of its sides, and threw forward another platoon in its front. Both gained the ridge of the bank and gave their fire at the same instant amongst numbers crowded together in the tank. The next minute there was no one in that enclosure except the killed —the enemy were in headlong flight. Close to the scene of action stood a village and the Indian fort of Timery. Clive took possession of the village and summoned the fort; but the governor knew he had no battering cannon, and refused to surrender; and, after throwing a few shells into the fort from a cohorn mortar, Clive marched back to Arcot and employed his men in repairing the works of that crazy fortress. The enemy, seeing that he made no more sallies, conceived that he was beginning to be afraid of them; and, having raised their force to 3000 fighting men, they encamped within three miles of the town. On the night of the 14th of September, when they were buried in sleep, Clive burst into their camp, committed a great slaughter, and put them all to flight, without losing a single man. At this time the two eighteen pounders which he had demanded were on their way from Madras, escorted only by a few sepoys. Knowing that the enemy had occupied part of the road and taken possession of a strong pagoda, in the intention of intercepting this escort, Clive sent out thirty Englishmen and fifty sepoys with a field-piece to dislodge them from the pagoda. The detachment found that the pagoda was abandoned, but that the enemy had retreated to a fort on the road, where they were continually reinforced. Upon this intelligence Clive sent on nearly his whole force, remaining in the fortress with only thirty Europeans and fifty sepoys, while there were from 3000 to 4000 natives within the same

walls. The enemy hereupon changed their design, and, quitting all the positions they had occupied on the road, they returned hastily to Arcot, hoping to carry the fort by assault. During the night they completely surrounded the fort with horse and foot; and on the following morning they opened a fire of musketry upon the ramparts from some adjacent houses which overlooked them. As this attack produced no effect, a large body of horse and foot, mixed and in disorder, advanced to the outer gate of the fort, with a terrific din of voices and warlike music; but a few hand-grenades thrown amongst them frightened the horses, which knocked down and galloped over the foot; and cavalry and infantry soon disappeared. About an hour after, a similar attack was followed by an equally quick repulse: and between night and morning the mass of Clive's little force, with the sepoys and the two precious battering cannon from Madras, appeared on the skirts of the town. The enemy then packed up and fled, and Clive quietly opened his gates to receive his people. During the attack the natives in the fort, well satisfied with his kind treatment, remained perfectly quiet.

As had been expected, Chunda withdrew the greater part of his forces from Trichinopoly: he did not march with them himself, but sent his son, Rajah Saheb, who entered the town of Arcot with 4000 horse and foot and 150 French from Pondicherry, and fixed his headquarters in the palace of the nabob. Being joined by the forces previously collected in the neighbourhood, Chunda found himself at the head of 10,000 men, and with these he prosecuted a siege against a contemptible fort defended by Clive's little band. Yet on the 24th the English commander made a sally with the view of driving Rajah Saheb from the palace and the town, or, if he failed in that, of striking terror into the native troops by the excess of his audacity. But after a fight in the streets he was compelled by the artillery of the French to fall back into the fort. Had there been none but native troops both palace and town would have been cleared. In this day's sortie Clive lost fifteen of his English soldiers, and one of his best officers, who sacrificed his own life in protecting that of his commander.* Moreover, Lieutenant Revel, his only artillery officer, was disabled.

He was now cooped up within the walls of the fortress, which were in many places falling to ruin. These walls were more than a mile in circumference; the rampart too narrow to admit the firing of artillery; the parapet was low and weak; the towers were only capable of receiving one cannon each; and the ditch was fordable in most places, and perfectly dry and choked up in others. The houses already mentioned as overlooking the ramparts were soon filled with troops, and good French marksmen picked off several of the English garrison. At midnight, when the enemy had retired from their advanced positions, an attempt was made to blow up these houses, but it failed, and was the cause of depriving Clive of the services of another of his officers. He had now only four officers fit for duty. In order to husband the provisions within the fort, he sent away all the natives except a few artificers. For fourteen days the enemy prosecuted the siege with musketry from the houses and a bombardment from four mortars. Several of the English were killed, and more were wounded on the ramparts, though they only showed their heads above the parapet. Clive himself had several hair-breadth escapes: three sergeants, who at different times singly attended him in visiting the works, were killed at his side. On the 24th of October the French, who had hitherto had no battering cannon, received from Pondicherry two eighteen pounders and seven pieces of smaller calibre. A well-served battery was then opened, and at their very first shot the French dismounted one of Clive's eighteen-pounders, and at the next entirely disabled it. The English mounted their other eighteen-pounder, but this too was soon dismounted, and was employed afterwards only in those parts of the fort where it was not exposed

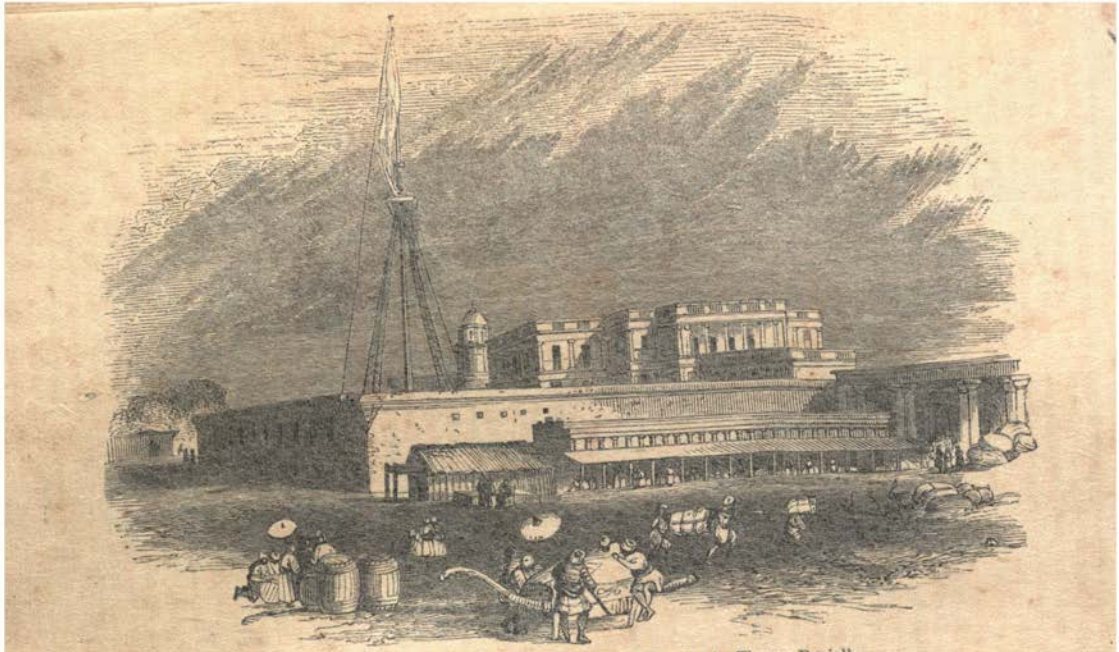
* This was Lieutenant Trenwith, who, seeing a sepoy from a window taking aim at Clive, pulled him on one side; upon which the sepoy, changing his aim, shot Trenwith through the body.

to the French artillery. In six days the French beat down all the wall between two of the towers, and made a practicable breach fifty feet wide. But, while they were making this breach, Clive, with remarkable ingenuity, was making a deep trench, and erecting palisades and a strong parapet behind it; and he planted one of his field-pieces on one of the towers which flanked the breach, and two small pieces of cannon on the flat roof of a house within the fort, and just opposite to the entrance which the French guns had made. The besiegers, aware of these preparations, would not venture into the breach until they should effect another in an opposite direction. They had burst one of their eighteen-pounders, but they carried the remaining one, with a nine-pounder, to a new battery which they had erected on the opposite side of the fort. Within that precinct Clive had found one of those enormous cannons which Turks, Persians, and other Orientals have always so much admired. According to the local tradition, this monster gun had been sent from Delhi by the Emperor Aurungzebe, and had been drawn by 1000 yoke of oxen. Clive raised a mound of earth to such a height as commanded the nabob's palace over the roofs of the houses that lay between: he hoisted the great gun on this mound, and, having found some iron ball which had been cast for the gun, he loaded and fired. The ponderous ball went right through the palace, to the terror of Rajah Saheb and his principal officers there assembled. But, as every charge took thirty pounds of powder, Clive ordered that the gun should be fired only once a-day. On the fourth day the monster burst. Both in imitation and retaliation the enemy raised a mound opposite one of the gates, and put two pieces of cannon upon it; but before they could well begin their fire Clive brought his reserved eighteen-pounder to bear upon it, and in less than an hour the mound gave way and tumbled down with the fifty men perched upon it. The company's agents at Madras and Fort St. David, informed of the desperate contest in which Clive was engaged, determined to make an effort to relieve him; but so limited were their means, that all they could do was to send 100 English soldiers and 200 sepoys, under the command of Lieutenant Innis. This party, who had no cannon, were attacked on the road between Madras and Arcot by 2000 native troops, who had with them two field-pieces served by Europeans; and Innis, after a sharp contest in which he lost twenty English soldiers and two officers, thought it prudent to face about and return to Madras. Clive and his reduced garrison thus seemed left alone to their fate; but the gallant defence they had made had produced a deep impression far and near, and the fickle nature of Indian alliances and compacts soon gave him more than a gleam of hope.

At the distance of about thirty miles from Arcot there lay encamped a body of 6000 Mahrattas, under the command of Morari Row, a chief of more energy than conscience. Clive, surrounded as he was, found means to send a messenger to this chief; and the messenger soon returned safe to the fort with a letter in which Morari Row stated that he would not delay a moment to send a detachment to the assistance of such brave men as the defenders of Arcot, whose behaviour had now, for the first time, convinced him that the English knew how to fight. Yet all that these Mahrattas did when they came was to plunder and set fire to some houses in the outskirts of the town, for they would not venture to attack the barricades which had been erected in every street and in every avenue leading to the besieged fort. In their advance or in their retreat they, however, intercepted some ammunition destined for the besiegers. In the meanwhile the French guns had made a second breach, and Clive had counterworked it as he had done the first. This second breach was nearly thirty yards wide; but the ditch there was deep and full of water. On the 14th of November, the great festival in commemoration of the murder of the holy brothers Hassan and Hussein, when the Mohammedans of India quicken their fanaticism with opium and with bang, Rajah Saheb and his French allies resolved to storm the fort through its two opposite breaches. Elephants with large

plates of iron fixed on their foreheads were driven up to the gates as if they could have battered them down, and in the rear of these enormous animals marched or scrambled a multitude of men on foot. This first essay was signally unfortunate, for the elephants, being wounded by the men on the ramparts, rushed madly round, threw down the rabble rout, trampled a good many of them to death, and then went off with their probosces in the air. The work in the breaches was more serious. In front of the first (to the north-west) the ditch was fordable, and there hundreds upon hundreds, drunk and furious with their wild devotion and the drugs working on their stomachs and brains, rushed across and entered the mortal gap. Some of these aspirants after the higher paradise even got across the trench which Clive had dug behind the breach. He let them come on almost to the palisade before he gave fire; but then he opened upon them with two pieces of cannon and with his musketry, and every shot and bullet told on their confused mass. They went back shrieking; but others crowded through the breach, and when these were driven off they were still succeeded by others. The fire of small arms from the palisade and parapet never slackened for a moment, for Clive's men who were behind kept loading the muskets and handing them to the front rank as fast as they could discharge them. The musketry, the two cannon, and some bombs which Clive had prepared with short fusees, at length drove back the bravest or maddest of the assailants, and strewed nearly every foot of ground with their dead or wounded. But in the meantime they were attempting the other breach. To cross the deep water of the ditch they had prepared a raft, which they launched with seventy men upon it. This breach, like the other, was flanked on either side by a tower, and in each of the towers there was one field-piece. Observing that his men were firing with bad aim, and that the raft was drawing near without injury, Clive ran into one of the towers, took the management of the field-piece into his own hands, and fired with such precision that in three or four discharges the raft was broken to pieces and the seventy men tumbled into the ditch—of whom some were drowned, some killed by shot in the water, and some enabled to escape by swimming. All further attempts at storming were abandoned. The enemy had lost 400 in killed and wounded, few of whom were Europeans, for during the storm most of the French troops were observed drawn up and looking on at a distance. As for Clive, he had only four English killed and two sepoys wounded. So many of his garrison being disabled by wounds or sickness, the number which repulsed the storm was no more than eighty English, officers included, and 120 sepoys, and these, besides serving five pieces of cannon, expended 12,000 musket cartridges during the attack. The enemy, after a pause of two hours, renewed their fire upon the fort with musketry from the houses and with their cannon; but this was a mere waste of powder and shot, and at two o'clock in the afternoon they requested leave to carry off and bury their dead. Clive allowed them two hours. At four o'clock they once more opened their fire, nor did they again cease till two hours after midnight, when of a sudden a dead silence ensued. When day broke Clive learned that the whole army had abandoned Arcot in haste and confusion. He instantly threw open a gate and marched into their deserted quarters, where he found four pieces of artillery, four mortars, and a large quantity of ammunition. Thus ended the siege of the fort of Arcot, which had lasted fifty days, and which, in a military point of view, had been highly honourable to all engaged in the defence. It established Clive's character as a soldier, and it raised the reputation of English arms in India from the lowest to the very highest pitch.* It has been

* Orme. — The English troops engaged had never been under fire before this campaign. The sepoys acting with them behaved with great gallantry and testified a warm affection for their white comrades. When provisions were becoming scarce in the fort the sepoys proposed that Clive should limit them to canjee, the water in which the rice is boiled, and which resembles very thin gruel. "It is," said they, "sufficient for our support: the Europeans require the grain."—*Sir John Malcolm, Life of Lord Clive.*



The Goverument Buildings, Madras. From a Drawing by Thomas Daniell.

No. 5.

said by a competent judge that Clive, who at this time had neither read military books nor conversed with men capable of giving him much instruction in the art of war, had employed all the resources which are dictated by the best masters—that he acted like an experienced general from the beginning—that he was born a soldier.*

On the evening of the day on which the enemy fled from Arcot a detachment from Madras, consisting of 150 English with four field-pieces, under the command of Captain Kilpatrick, arrived safely at Arcot. Leaving a small garrison in the fort, Clive set out on the 19th of November to pursue the enemy, with 200 English, 700 sepoys, and three field-pieces. Being joined by a small body of Mahratta horse sent to him by Morari Row, he gave the enemy battle at a place called Arnee, and, though they were 300 French and more than 2000 natives, horse and foot, with four field-pieces, he completely routed them, and the French were only saved from destruction from the darkness of the night. The valour of the Mahrattas was encouraged by the booty they made, for they took 400 horses and Chunda Saheb's military chest, containing 100,000 rupees. Six hundred sepoys, who had been serving the French, immediately deserted with their arms and accoutrements, and joined Clive; and the killadar or governor of Arnee abandoned the cause of Chunda Saheb and the French, and declared for Mohammed Ali and the English. With admirable rapidity Clive next proceeded to Conjeveram, made a breach in that strong pagoda, and forced the French to fly from it by night. After destroying the defences of this place, and strengthening the garrison that he had left at Arcot, Clive returned to Fort St. David to report his successes and to suggest bolder and wider operations. Mohammed Ali, instead of being besieged in Trichinopoly, saw the country open to him and a great part of the Carnatic submissive to his will. He was joined by some of Morari Row's Mahrattas, eager for fighting, or rather for plunder, who were incensed at Captain Gingen, for refusing to take the field with his small English force. "These," said they, "are not the same kind of men we saw fight so gallantly at Arcot." But Clive had not been long at Fort St. David when the enemy re-assembled, and with 4500 natives, horse and foot, 400 French, and a train of artillery, began to ravage the company's territory and the districts which had declared for Mohammed Ali. Early in February (1752) Clive, having been reinforced from Bengal, went out to meet them with 380 English, 1300 sepoys, and six field-pieces. Such was the terror of his name that they retreated before him, abandoning one strong position after another. Lengthening and quickening his marches, he, however, came up with them at the village of Covrepauk, defeated them after a hard-fought battle, and took nine pieces of cannon and sixty Frenchmen. Fifty Frenchmen and 300 sepoys were found dead upon the field. Clive's loss included forty English and thirty sepoys killed, and a much greater number were wounded. Chunda Saheb's troops dispersed and fled to their homes, and the French made all the haste they could to the protecting walls of Pondicherry.

Clive, the conqueror, returned to Fort St. David, where the presidency determined to dispatch him to Trichinopoly. But just at this juncture Major Laurence returned from England and took the command as superior officer. Laurence, however, who was wholly devoid of professional jealousy, and who had the warmest admiration for the daring self-taught soldier, took Clive with him when he set out for Trichinopoly, with 400 English, 1100 sepoys, and eight field-pieces. As 20,000 Hindus from the kingdom of Mysore and 6000 Mahrattas were ready to co-operate with the English, the troops of Chunda Saheb and the French, who had again gathered in the neighbourhood of Trichinopoly, broke up in dismay, the French retreating to a

* Major Laurence, Narrative. We suspect, however, that since his arrival in India Clive had assisted his natural genius with some careful study of a few books. It is mentioned, indeed, that in the governor's house at Fort St. George there was a good library open at all times to the young writer; and that Clive, during the first year or two of his residence in India, through poverty and pride, shyness, and a sense of his deficient education, led a very secluded life.

strong pagoda in Seringham, an island formed by the rivers Coleroon and Cauvery, and burning part of their baggage and provisions which they could not transport with them. By the advice of Clive, Major Laurence divided his small force, and sent a detachment across the Coleroon to intercept the enemy's supplies. Clive had the command of this detachment, and performed his duty so effectually that the French soon began to feel the horrible approaches of famine. Dupleix from Pondicherry sent M. d'Auteuil to supply and reinforce the French on the island; but d'Auteuil was driven back by some of the troops of Major Laurence, forced into an old fort, and there compelled to surrender with all his convoy. A few days after the French at Seringham capitulated and became prisoners of war; and their ally Chunda Saheb, who had so recently been lord of the Carnatic, finding himself deserted by the last of his troops, fled to the camp of his enemies and surrendered to the general of the Tanjore forces, a wily Hindu, who had promised him protection, and who now put him in irons. Forthwith a violent dispute arose between Mohammed Ali, the Mahratta chiefs, the Rajah of Mysore, and the Tanjorines, who each and all claimed the person of the prisoner. To put an end to this quarrel, Major Laurence proposed that the fallen potentate should for the present be delivered up to the English; but the disputants separated without coming to any agreement, and before the discussion could be renewed the Tanjorines cut off the head of Chunda Saheb and sent it to his now fortunate rival Mohammed Ali, who exhibited it as a trophy to his army. Laurence and Clive have both been blamed for suffering this foul assassination, but it will appear on a candid examination of the facts that neither they nor any of their allies had any foreknowledge or anticipation of the deed, which sprung from the jealousy and ferocity of the Tanjore chief, over whom they had no control.

The English were now eager to advance against the fortress of Gingee, the only place in the Carnatic which remained to their enemies; but fresh and far more violent disputes broke out among their allies and retarded their march. In the hour of his greatest weakness and distress Mohammed Ali, to obtain the assistance of the Regent of Mysore, had solemnly promised him the city and territory of Trichinopoly, and the Mysorean now claimed immediate possession of that important city. When Laurence spoke with Mohammed Ali, that nabob treated the whole matter in a truly Indian manner, saying that the Regent of Mysore could not but know that when he made such a promise he never intended to fulfil it. After some time lost in altercation the nabob consented that the fort of Trichinopoly should be delivered up to the Regent of Mysore in two months; but, having no reliance on his faith, the Mysorean troops refused to quit the place, and induced some of the Mahrattas to remain with them. As the troops of Tanjore and other auxiliaries had marched to their homes, the English had few or none to advance with them to Gingee, except the sepoys in their own pay. They marched nevertheless to that strong place, which was held by a brave and well-trained French garrison, sustained a repulse, and were obliged to retreat with some loss. This gave new encouragement to Dupleix, whose schemes were still as extensive as ever, and who resolved to leave no art, no force, no means, foul or fair, untried, to establish the supremacy of the French all over the Carnatic. Well acquainted with the dissensions prevailing between Mohammed Ali and the Regent of Mysore, he opened a secret correspondence with the Mysoreans and the Mahrattas, hoping to break the confederacy into pieces by force of intrigue and the vehemence of their own passions. In these labours it is said he derived wonderful assistance from his wife, who was born in India, and perfectly understood not only the languages but also the character of the natives. In his union with this lady, who is described as being even more ambitious than himself, we may probably find the cause of the essentially Oriental spirit of most of his proceedings. In a very short time Major Laurence was recalled to the neighbourhood of Fort St. David by intelligence that Dupleix had

another considerable army on foot. With 400 English, 1700 sepoys, 4000 troops in the pay of Mohammed Ali, and nine field-pieces, he encountered this French army near Bahoor, only two miles from Fort St. David, and obtained a victory which would have been far more complete if the nabob's troops had not thought more of plundering than fighting. Laurence was now enabled to detach Clive to Covelong, an important fort in the Carnatic, about twenty miles south of Madras. The force which Clive took with him consisted of 200 recruits who had just been landed at Madras, and who are represented as being the very refuse of the jails of London, and of 500 newly raised sepoys. But as Clive had become a general as if by inspiration, so had he the faculty of making soldiers in a week out of vagabonds and cut-purses. With this force and with four 24-pounders he attacked Covelong, which mounted 30 pieces of cannon, and was garrisoned by 50 French and 300 sepoys. At first the jail-birds showed some trepidation, but Clive shamed them out of their fears by exposing himself to the hottest of the fire, and by the time the fort surrendered they were heroes. The morning after the surrender of Covelong, Ensign Joseph Smith discovered a large body of troops advancing, and correctly judged that this must be a detachment from Chingliput intended to relieve Covelong. Clive instantly took every precaution to conceal from this corps that the fort had fallen; and then he laid an ambuscade in their route. The French fell into the trap, and the very first volley fired by the concealed English killed or wounded 100 men. The rest threw down their arms and fled or surrendered. The French officer commanding, 25 Europeans and 250 sepoys, with two pieces of cannon, were taken. Clive next proceeded with all possible rapidity to Chingliput, which was about 40 miles to the south-west of Covelong, the fort being completely defended on one side by a lake, and on another by a swamp; it was moreover surrounded by a broad and deep ditch. Clive presently erected a battery within 200 yards of the outer wall, made a breach, and prepared to storm; but the French commandant called a parley and surrendered the place on condition of being allowed the honours of war. The French garrison evacuated Chingliput on the 31st of October (1752) and marched to Pondicherry; Clive returned to Madras, and, finding his health, which had never been very robust, greatly impaired by the incessant fatigues he had undergone, he proceeded to England by the first ship.

## CHAPTER III.

### CLIVE'S ABSENCE FROM INDIA.

CLIVE'S back was scarcely turned when Dupleix's diplomacy and intrigue obtained the most signal triumphs. The Regent of Mysore, perceiving that Mohammed Ali had not the remotest intention of gratifying him with the possession of Trichinopoly, abruptly broke his alliance and joined the French, and his example was followed by Morari Row, the chief of the Mahrattas, who considered that they had not been allowed their fair share of booty. Still further to increase this defection, Dupleix opened negotiations with the Mohammedan governor of Vellore, and he gained this chief by flattering him with the hope of obtaining the nabobship of the Carnatic. Joined by the troops of these recent allies of the English, the French advanced once more to Trichinopoly, and laid close siege to that place. Major Laurence soon discovered the defection of the Mahrattas, and he ordered an attack upon a part of their forces which yet remained within his reach. This attack was led under cover of the night by Captain Dalton, who penetrated their camp and committed some slaughter. But shortly after the Mahrattas made an attack upon an advanced post of the British, and cut to pieces 70 English and about 300 sepoys. Captain Dalton turned out of the city a large body of Mysoreans who were still pretending to be friends. Neither Mahrattas nor Mysoreans had any inclination to attempt the reduction of the fort by storm; but they hoped to be able to reduce it by famine. They watched every avenue to the place as closely as they could, they kept parties of horse constantly scouring the country to intercept the supplies, they prohibited the introduction of any kind of provisions, and they cut off the noses of those whom they caught attempting to infringe their orders. The magazines in Trichinopoly had been intrusted to the care of a brother of Mohammed Ali; yet, when Captain Dalton found it necessary to inspect the stores, he found that this man had taken advantage of the scarcity in the city to sell at a high price a considerable part of the rice and other provisions, and that what remained would suffice only for the consumption of a few days. Captain Dalton made his situation known to Major Laurence, who had retired to Madras, but who immediately took the field and marched to his relief. Laurence arrived at Trichinopoly on the 6th of May (1753), but the hurried march and the heat of the weather had proved fatal to several of his English troops, who had died upon the road, and above a hundred more were sick and helpless and only fit for the hospital. No attempt was however made to intercept him or to prevent his entrance into the place. When his forces were joined to those of Captain Dalton they did not exceed 500 English and 2000 sepoys: there was indeed quartered in the town a body of Mohammed Ali's force, but these fellows were ill paid and mutinous. Provisions now found their way into the town; but Dupleix and his allies made such exertions that in a short time nearly 30,000 men, including about 500 French, were gathered round the place. Major Laurence made several sorties, and even attempted to drive the enemy from the strong pagoda of Seringham, which they had again occupied; but he failed, and was compelled to retire with some loss. The French drew nearer and made an attack upon a post called the Golden Rock, which Laurence had established in order to keep open his communications with the country. The post was defended by sepoys, who

gave way before the impetuous attack of M. Astruc; and the French flag was hoisted on the rock. Laurence sent his grenadiers to recover the important position, and it was soon recovered at the point of the bayonet; but, as the whole French force came up to support their comrades, a general action ensued, in which the Mysore army and the Mahratta cavalry took part. The Mahrattas occasionally made a charge and did some mischief, but the Mysoreans kept themselves at a respectful distance in the rear: the stern contest was only between the British and the French; but the British bayonet finished the day, and the French fled from the field, leaving three field-pieces behind them. Laurence returned triumphantly to the walls of Trichinopoly; but his loss, considering the small number of his troops, was considerable, and forced him to confess that one or two more victories of the same kind would have ruined him. The Indian Rajah of Tanjore professed to remain steady to the English interest, but he sent little or no assistance to Trichinopoly. It was now resolved that Major Laurence should proceed with Mohammed Ali to the Tanjore frontier, in order to obtain from the rajah the fulfilment of some of his promises. At the hour of departure Mohammed Ali's own troop assembled in the court of the palace, declaring that they would not allow him to depart until he had paid their arrears. English bayonets opened a path through these mutinous natives; but as soon as the nabob was gone they went over in a body to the enemy.* The journey to the Tanjore frontier was however very successful, for the rajah sent 3000 horse and 2000 foot under the command of Monackgee, the general who had assassinated Chunda Saheb, to co-operate with the English and the forces of Mohammed Ali. Moreover, Laurence was now joined by 170 British soldiers who had just arrived from England, and by 300 natives who enrolled as sepoys. Thus reinforced, with his carts well loaded with provisions, and with some thousands of bullocks in his train, Laurence returned towards Trichinopoly. The French made a spirited attempt to cut off his convoy and impede his entrance into the town, but they were again repelled by the bayonets of the English grenadiers, and Laurence and the nabob got to their old quarters without loss or damage. The French and their allies made no progress in reducing Trichinopoly, and the English and their allies had not sufficient force to compel them to raise the blockade. The French employed all their efforts in cutting off the supplies, and the English all theirs to keep the place sufficiently victualled. Many encounters took place, in one of which M. Astruc and several French officers were taken prisoners. Months were passed in this manner in foraging and skirmishing. In the autumn a party of Laurence's troops took Weyconda, a post of some strength, and the French and their allies then retired from the vicinity of Trichinopoly, apparently with the intention of giving up the blockade. But on the 20th of November, when Laurence was fifteen miles from the town, and when the Tanjore troops had quitted him to return to their homes, he was startled by news of an attack made by the French on Trichinopoly. Before he reached that town he was, however, gladdened by the intelligence that the few English and the sepoys within it had repulsed the French with a terrible loss. For two or three months there was a complete suspension of arms in this part of the Carnatic.

But in the mean time M. Bussy, who took his departure for Hyderabad in 1752 to establish Salabut Jung in the sovereignty of the Deccan, had gone through a series of brilliant and romantic adventures, had penetrated further into the country than any European army had hitherto gone, and had to all appearance consolidated the authority of his ally. Bussy had been living with all the pomp and splendour of a vizier or a sultan at Golconda, and directing all the measures of Salabut Jung's government. To expel the French and their allies, and to place upon the throne of the Deccan Ud-Dien, the prince of the Mogul's choice, every exertion was made that the reduced means

* These fellows gave notice to Captain Dalton of their intention, and requested, as a last favour, that he would not fire upon them. Dalton, glad to be rid of them, told them that they might go without any fear.

of the emperor would allow; an army of Mahrattas, who were ever ready to sell their services to any party, or to embark on either side in any war that offered a prospect of abundant booty, were engaged by the Mogul, and placed with other native troops under the command of Ud-Dien. But this unfortunate claimant was carried off by poison, or by his own excesses, as he was entering the province of Golconda with 100,000 horse. Upon this event many of his host took their departure, but the Mahrattas, eager for the spoil of a rich province, continued their advance and encountered the French and the troops of Salabut Jung in several places. Bussy defeated them repeatedly, and once or twice with so much slaughter that the Mahrattas became anxious for peace. Salabut Jung then purchased their retreat by ceding to them some districts near Berar and Burhanpour; and they gladly withdrew from the murderous execution of Bussy's quick musketry and artillery. The bold Frenchman had, however, soon to experience how slightly the ties of gratitude attached Indian princes and politicians. Disgusted at seeing Salabut Jung completely ruled by a handful of foreigners, and forgetting that those foreigners alone had gained and could defend the Deccan, the courtiers advised their master to reduce the pride and power of the French, who did not enjoy or exercise it with much moderation. Taking advantage of the temporary absence of Bussy, Salabut Jung withheld the pay of the French troops, and then began to detach them in small parties to distant quarters. But some of the Mahratta tribes, continually on the watch, discovered this dispersion of the only force they feared, and instantly began to prepare for a new war in the Deccan. Quickened by the prayers of Salabut Jung, Bussy hurried back to his post, and was instantly allowed to reunite his scattered forces and to dictate his own terms to that trembling court. The courtiers and ministers who had intrigued against him were forthwith exiled; and, as security for vast arrears already accumulated and for future pay, he obtained at the end of the year 1753 the cession of the five important provinces of Ellore, Rajamundry, Cicacole, Condapilly, and Guntoor, called the Northern Circars, which made the French masters of the sea-coast of Coromandel and Orissa, for an uninterrupted line of 600 miles; and which not only afforded a vast revenue, but also furnished the most convenient means of receiving reinforcements of men and military stores from Pondicherry and Mauritius. thus enabling Bussy to extend his views to the indirect or absolute empire of the Deccan and the south. But neither the court of Versailles nor the French India Company at home had embraced the grand projects of Bussy and Dupleix; the court questioned the propriety of these wars with the English in a time of peace, and the company doubted whether these territorial acquisitions could be maintained profitably to themselves. The French directors or managers were all for trade and peace, and were quite incapable of the exertions which the joint-stock English company could make with little inconvenience.* Dupleix, too, had had his day, and, considering the mutations and intrigues of the old French cabinet, it had been a long one: his protectors and admirers were now out of office; his recall to France was procured, and a M. Godheu was sent out to supersede him as governor of Pondicherry, with instructions to negotiate immediately a peace with the English and their allies. M. Godheu arrived at Pondicherry in the beginning of August, 1754; and with the return ship that carried away Dupleix the grand schemes of French empire and dominion in the East seemed to vanish into thin air. On his arrival in Europe this ambitious and able man found himself obliged to dispute the miserable remains of his fortune with the French East India Company, to dance humble attendance on ministers and their understrappers, and to solicit audiences in the antechambers of his judges. His vexation was as great as what Labourdonnais had suffered through his means; and he was soon dead and forgotten in France. The

* It is to be understood, however, that the English company also was at this moment desirous of peace.

only anxiety of M. Godheu seemed to be to conclude peace and get back to Paris as soon as possible. Mr. Saunders, the president of Madras, who was as well acquainted with the complicated affairs of India as Godheu was ignorant of them, readily entered into negotiations, but with the full determination of making no one important sacrifice or concession. On the 11th of October a suspension of arms was agreed to for three months; and on the 26th of December of the same year (1754) a provisional treaty was signed at Pondicherry. The French stipulated to withdraw their troops from the Carnatic, and to interfere no more in the affairs of the native princes there, thus leaving Mohammed Ali, the ally or creature of the English, undisputed Nabob of the Carnatic. They also agreed that the territorial possessions of the French and English should be settled and defined on the principle of equality, thus virtually resigning nearly all that Bussy and Dupleix had acquired by their wars and policy. This treaty was to be confirmed or altered in Europe, but, until the decision of the French and English companies should be known, no hostilities direct or indirect were to be allowed.

M. Bussy, however, left undisturbed at Golconda, continued his control over the Deccan; and the Mysoreans, alleging that the French had no authority to bind them by their paper agreements, seemed disposed to continue the blockade of Trichinopoly, and remained in that neighbourhood until they were scared away by the report that a Mahratta army was marching to attack them. Their departure finished a siege and blockade which had lasted altogether more than a year, and which had brought out on the part of the English troops uncommon bravery, steadiness, and no inconsiderable skill. Yet the pacification was scarcely settled when the two rival European nations were involved in fresh differences: the French complained that the English continued to keep their troops with Mohammed Ali to assist him in collecting his revenues and reducing his refractory subjects; and the English justified their conduct by showing that M. Bussy and the French troops with him in the interior continued to render the same services, and on a more extensive scale, to Salabut Jung. It soon became evident that no peace or truce could be of long duration. As there was no work to employ an English squadron which had arrived under the command of Admiral Watson, it was resolved to send some of the ships to destroy the nests of some powerful pirates who for fifty years had been committing depredations on the Malabar coast. The chiefs of these corsairs were a family of the Mahratta race, and bore the name of Angria, who had established on the coast a power closely resembling that of the Algerines, and who nominally acknowledged the Peishwa, or the supreme head of the Mahrattas, as the Algerines nominally professed allegiance to the Ottoman Porte. But the Angrias had recently given such offence to the Peishwa that he determined upon their destruction, and consented to join his fleet to the English squadron. In 1755 the English ships under the command of Commodore James drove the pirates from two of their strongholds, and took possession of them, the Mahratta fleet of the Peishwa never coming within reach of cannon-shot till the fighting was over. But the chief nest of the pirates—the fort and port of Gheriah—was not attacked until the following year, when the adventurous Clive had returned from England with improved health and enlarged hopes.

Clive accompanied Admiral Watson on this expedition, which was not without difficulty and danger, nor without that prospect of booty and prize-money which tempts men to defy peril. The Peishwa's Mahrattas also joined, not to fight, but to appropriate all the booty as their right when the place should be taken by the English. On the 11th of February the English fleet, consisting of eight ships, a grab, and five bomb-ketches, having on board 800 Europeans and 1000 sepoys, commanded by Clive, arrived off Gheriah; while a Mahratta army approached on the land side. The pirates' nest stood on a rocky promontory, nearly surrounded by the sea, and crowned by a fort of extraordinary strength. The English sailors soon succeeded in burning the fleet, though under the guns of the fort, and

Clive then landed his troops and interposed them between the walls of the town and the Mahratta army, who, if they had entered, would have left little but bare walls to the English. The pirates, in whom ferocity had been mistaken for courage, made but a feeble and foolish resistance; they quailed under the hot shower of shot and shells; Angria, their chief, fled from the fort to seek refuge in the Mahratta camp; and on the 13th the place fell. Booty to the value of about ten lacs of rupees was divided between the royal navy and the company's land-troops: the Mahrattas were excluded from any share, and the English disagreed as to their own proper proportions. The officers of the navy, as bearing the king's commission, claimed the larger share, and they decreed that Clive, though he commanded the entire land force, should only share with a post-captain in the navy. Some warm correspondence took place on this delicate matter. Admiral Watson, who said that he was only anxious to defend the rights of the service to which he belonged, offered to make up from his own share the difference between Clive's share and the share of his second in command, Rear-Admiral Pococke; but Clive replied that his own anxiety was only to satisfy his troops, and that he could not enrich himself with money taken from Watson's personal share of the capture.* Disputes of this nature arose almost every time that the king's ships or land troops co-operated with those of the company, although it appears to have been usual to adjust the relative claims to the booty to be made before entering upon the expedition. The present disagreement was, however, productive of no evil consequence, and, apparently, of no interruption to the mutual regard existing between Clive and Watson.

* Clive's evidence in reports of the committee of the House of Commons.—Sir John Malcolm, Life of Clive.

Preceded by glowing reports of his remarkable achievements at Arcot and in other parts of the Carnatic, Clive had been received in England with enthusiasm. Young as he was, he was hailed as the best of living English generals; the great men in Leadenhall-street proposed his health at public dinners as the saviour of their establishments in India; the court of directors voted him a sword set with diamonds as a token of their esteem and of their sense of his singular services to the company on the coast of Coromandel; fresh banquets were given to celebrate his deeds, and in society at large and wherever he went, Clive received the tribute due to a daring and successful soldier, who had worked out great ends with most disproportionate means. With laudable delicacy and gratitude he refused to accept the diamond-hilted sword until the court of directors had voted a similar present to his superior in command, Major Laurence. The greater part of the money he had brought with him from India he gave to his impoverished family; and, merely upon pecuniary grounds, it soon seemed expedient to him that he should return to the land of rupees. To the company his presence there was no less desirable, and it was resolved in sending him back to appoint him governor of Fort St. David, with a provisional commission to succeed to the government of Madras. George II., who loved a soldier, gave him the commission of lieutenant-colonel in the British army, which it was hoped would obviate the quarrels about rank which so frequently occurred between the king's and the company's officers. After the reduction of the pirates' nest at Gheriah, Colonel Clive proceeded to Fort St. David, and assumed the government of that place on the 20th of June, 1756, the very day on which the Nabob of Bengal took Calcutta from the English, and disgraced his success with detestable cruelties.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WAR BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AT CALCUTTA AND THE NABOB OF BENGAL.

THE company's settlement at Calcutta had risen rapidly under the pacific rule of Aliverdy Khan, the Mussulman viceroy of the Great Mogul, but who had become virtually the independent and absolute sovereign of all the rich kingdom or territory of Bengal—the richest country in all India, with the most pusillanimous Hindu population. Aliverdy was, for India, a prince of rare virtues: while his neighbours and brother potentates consumed their time and their strength in multitudinous harems, and, in defiance of the Koran, stupified their intellects with excessive drinking, he adhered most scrupulously to the law of the Prophet which prohibits the use of wine and strong drinks; and he neglected at the same time to avail himself of the Prophet's licence for indulging in a plurality of wives and an *ad libitum* number of concubines. To the amazement of Hindus and Mohammedans, Aliverdy rested satisfied with one faithful and beloved wife. He was orderly, prudent, just, and averse to all violence; he encouraged the trade of the English settled in his dominions, and derived a fair and growing profit from their prosperity. Their factors and their various agents travelled without interruption through every part of his dominions, finding everywhere protection for their property and safety and respect for their persons. But Aliverdy Khan died early in the month of April of this year, 1756, and his grandson and successor, Suraj-u-Dowlah, a cruel, luxurious, and effeminate youth, proved altogether unworthy of him.

As in these Oriental despotisms nearly everything depends upon the personal character of the ruler, it was evident, from the first day of Suraj-u-Dowlah's accession, that everything in Bengal would undergo a rapid and thorough change. He was known to entertain very hostile feelings towards the English, so that everybody at Calcutta ought to have been prepared for his hostile attacks; and the stories related of his violence and cruelty—of his delighting in seeing torture inflicted under his own eye—might have warned them of the fate that awaited them if they ever fell into his power. He had seen the coffers of his grandfather filled directly or indirectly by the trade of the English; he had been led to believe that the wealth and treasures these foreign merchants had accumulated within the walls of Calcutta were enormous in extent, and always ready and tangible; and, like the fool in the fable, he resolved to kill the goose that laid these golden eggs. It was very easy to find pretexts for quarrel. Alarmed by reports from England that a new war with France was inevitable, and would be prosecuted in all parts of the world, the English had begun to fortify Calcutta, so as to prevent any attack by the French on the side of the river. Moreover, they had granted refuge in their fort to a very wealthy Hindu native called Kissendass, whom Suraj-u-Dowlah wished to plunder, and they had refused to give him up to his officers. Other facilities were afforded by a Hindu merchant, called Omichund, a man of intrigue and of enormous wealth, which he was constantly seeking to increase without any scruples as to the means he employed. Omichund had lived long in Calcutta, and had been permitted to engross much more of the company's investment than was allowed to any other contractor. The presidency, moreover, had almost constantly employed him to transact their political business with the nabob and the minor potentates

in the neighbourhood, and had paid him lavishly for all these services. The influence this intriguing Hindu had acquired was immense, and his power was altogether so great that it was dangerous to offend him. Yet the presidency, disgusted by some dishonest practices, had deprived him of all his contracts, and given him the most mortal offence. Omichund retired to Muxadabad, or Moorshedabad, with 4,000,000 of rupees; but he left his harem and a considerable part of his household property at Calcutta. It was believed that the vindictive Hindu put himself in close communication with the French at Chandernagore, and advised Suraj-u-Dowlah to annihilate the English settlement. After a short stay at Moorshedabad, Omichund returned to Calcutta to facilitate the scheme of destruction he recommended, and to act as a spy for the nabob.* Suraj-u-Dowlah dispatched a peremptory letter to Mr. Drake, the governor, ordering him instantly to destroy all the works which had been added to the fortifications of Calcutta. Mr. Drake replied that the nabob had been misinformed by those who reported that the English were building a wall round the town; that they had dug no ditch since the invasion of the Mahrattas, at which time such a work had been executed at the request of the Indian inhabitants, and with the full approbation of Aliverdy Khan, the late nabob; that in the late war between England and France the French had attacked and taken the town of Madras, contrary to the neutrality which it was expected would have been preserved in the Mogul's dominions; and that, there being at present great appearance of another war, the English were under apprehensions that the French would act in the same manner in Bengal; to prevent which they were repairing their line of guns on the bank of the river.† When this letter was presented, Suraj-u-Dowlah gave way to a paroxysm of rage, and threatened to behead or impale Mr. Watts, the English resident.

A few days after he collected his whole army at Moorshedabad, and sent a detachment of 3000 men to invest the small English fort and factory at Cossimbuzar. This investment was begun on the 22nd of May, but no hostilities were committed until the 1st of June, when the nabob arrived with the rest of his forces. The fort of Cossimbuzar had neither ditch nor palisade; its walls were contemptibly weak, the largest of its guns were but nine-pounders, and those were honeycombed or shaking upon rotted carriages: the garrison consisted of twenty-two Europeans and twenty Topasses, and of the Europeans the majority were Dutchmen. The nabob summoned Mr. Watts to come forth to him. Mr. Watts waited upon the savage in his tent, and was again threatened with impalement. He was compelled to sign a paper importing that the presidency of Calcutta should level whatever works they had raised; that they should instantly deliver up all subjects or tenants of the nabob who had taken protection in their settlement; and that, if it should be proved that the company's dustucks or passports for trade had ever been given to such persons as were not entitled to them, whatever the nabob's government had been defrauded of by such practices should be refunded by the presidency of Calcutta. Mr. Watts was next required to sign an order for the surrender of Cossimbuzar; but this he refused to do. But that fort was utterly incapable of resisting a vast army; and on the 4th of June the crumbling old gates were thrown open to the nabob. The soldiery that had room to enter its narrow precincts stole everything they found instead of sealing it up for the use of their master; and then they insulted and triumphed over the little garrison, as if, instead of forty-three men, they had conquered an army of thousands. Their conduct was so brutal, that, to escape from it, the English commanding officer, Ensign Elliot, put a pistol to his head and blew out his brains.

On the 9th of June Suraj-u-Dowlah struck his tents and began his march upon Calcutta. None of his officers attempted to restrain his rash and violent resolution, for they believed themselves sure of the plunder of one of the most

* Orme.

† Mr. Drake's letter, in Orme's History.

Suraj-u-Dowlah and his Ten Sons. From an original Painting taken at Fyzabad.

No. 6.

opulent cities in all India. Some Hindu bankers, who had derived great wealth from the European trade, and who better understood the means and sources of wealth, ventured to represent the English as a colony of inoffensive and useful merchants, who, if left to pursue their traffic, would every year enrich the country and the government; but their representations and prayers made no impression on the nabob, who continued his march. In the mean time the terrified and stupified presidency at Calcutta lost days and nights in doubts and deliberations: vainly hoping to avert the storm, they engaged to obey the nabob's orders, and to demolish whatever he might require, if he would only withdraw his army; and they never seriously applied themselves to the defence of the place until Suraj-u-Dowlah was within a few days' march with a still increasing army. They then implored the Dutch at Chinchura and the French at Chandernagore, for the sake of humanity and for the common cause of Europeans in India, to afford them some assistance against the nabob, who, if allowed to exterminate the English, would not long respect the weaker settlements of the other European nations. The Dutch coldly and positively refused any aid or succour, and the French insulted their distress by advising the English to repair with their goods and chattels to Chandernagore. Letters had been dispatched to Madras and to Bombay requesting reinforcements; but the sea was shut by the south monsoon, and months must have passed before any force could arrive from either of those quarters. Nothing, therefore, was left to do but to defend Calcutta with the force actually within it. This consisted of a regular garrison of 264 men, of a militia raised among the inhabitants of 250 men, and of 1500 bucksaries, or native Indian matchlock-men, whose arms and discipline were of the worst kind. Of the regular garrison and of the militia only 170 were English, the rest being Portuguese, Topasses, and Armenians, on whose valour and faith there was little dependence: and, to make the case still more hopeless, not ten of the English had ever seen any other service than that of the parade.* The genius and the all-ascendant spirit of a Clive might, even with this defective force, have made good the place against the disorderly, unwarlike host advancing against it; but there was no Clive in Calcutta, and too many of the English there whose voices were most potential were cursed with the selfish minds and narrow views of pedlers and trucksters. When all was at stake these men wanted to preserve their dwelling-houses, their magazines, their gardens, and their outhouses, from injury; and buildings which ought to have been blown into the air, because they commanded the ramparts of the fort, or covered the approaches, were left standing till Suraj-u-Dowlah should avail himself of them.

On the 13th of June a detachment was sent down the river in two ships of 300 tons and two brigantines to take possession of the fort of Taunah, which lay about five miles below Calcutta, and commanded the narrowest part of the river. The Mohammedan garrison fled at their approach, but, being speedily reinforced by 2000 men, they returned, drove the English out of the fort, and compelled the ships to retire to Calcutta. On the same day a letter was intercepted, written to Omichund by Suraj-u-Dowlah's head spy, advising him to send the effects he had in Calcutta out of the reach of danger as soon as possible. This confirmed the suspicions already entertained of that great Hindu: Omichund was immediately apprehended and carried a prisoner into the fort; and a guard was placed in his house to prevent the clandestine removal of his property. His brother-in-law, who had the chief management of his affairs, and who had made himself equally obnoxious to the presidency, concealed himself in the harem. Orders were sent to the guard to secure him; but the guard was resisted by the whole body of Omichund's peons, domestics, and armed retainers, who amounted to 300 men: a scuffle ensued, and ended in a combat, in which several were wounded on both sides. And while the guard and the peons

* Orme.

were contending in the outer apartments, the chief of the peons, a Hindu of high caste, set fire to the house, rushed into the harem, and, in order to save the women from the dishonour of being exposed to the gaze of strangers, stabbed them one by one, and then stabbed himself. It is said that thirteen females were thus sacrificed; but the dagger of the peon was used less effectually against his own person, for he survived the wound.*

On the 15th of June, two days after the bloody tragedy in Omichund's house, Suraj-u-Dowlah reached Hooghly, about twenty miles above Calcutta, and prepared to cross the river in an immense fleet of boats. What the English ships were doing we know not; but it should appear that the fire of two brigantines alone ought to have sunk and scattered these frail embarkations, and have effectually defended the passage of the river. On the morning of the 16th the nabob with nearly his whole force was on the Calcutta side of the river; the Indian inhabitants of the town were flying in all directions with their rice on their heads; and the Englishwomen, the Armenians, the Portuguese, and all who claimed to be Christians, were abandoning their houses in the city to take refuge within the fort, which was crowded and embarrassed in every part by women and children, and men as helpless or as timid. At the hour of noon the van of the nabob's army advancing from the northward was seen close on the company's bounds, and shortly after a firing commenced across the Mahratta ditch, and a natural rivulet which supplied the place of the ditch near the river, and which was defended by a badly constructed redoubt called Perring's Redoubt. The assailants kept themselves carefully under cover of some thickets and groves, firing with matchlocks from a great distance, and doing little or no mischief. As night set in they boiled their rice, took their supper, and went all to sleep. They were awakened about midnight by a young English ensign who had served in Clive's war in the Carnatic, and who now issued out of the redoubt, crossed the rivulet with a handful of men, crept silently into the groves and thickets, beat up and drove before him all the troops there, spiked four pieces of cannon, and then returned to his station without the loss of a single man. In the course of the night the chief of Omichund's peons and the slayer of his women escaped out of the town and showed Suraj-u-Dowlah the best way to enter it. On the following day the attack from the north was abandoned, and some thousands of the besiegers were led into the town on the east side where there were no defences. They set fire to the great bazaar or market, and they took possession of the quarter inhabited by the principal Indian merchants. A sortie from the fort drove some of these intruders back again and took some of them prisoners; but the report was spread that the nabob intended a general attack on the morrow.

As the fort of Calcutta, called Fort William, was only strong towards the river, and weak everywhere else, as the ramparts were commanded by the English houses and by the English church, it was deemed incapable of defence, and it was, therefore, resolved to make the defence outside by opposing the enemy in the streets and avenues that led to the fort. But scarcely a barricade had been erected, and not a ditch had been dug anywhere. Now, with precipitation and confusion, three batteries, each mounting two 18-pounders and two field-pieces, were thrown up in the streets at the distance of 300 or more yards from the gates of the fort, and some trenches were dug and breastworks raised to bar the progress of the enemy. Still, however, no care was taken to demolish a number of houses which overlooked these defences, or a series of banks and garden-walls that might serve to cover the foe. Early on the morning of the 18th the whole of the nabob's army was in motion, and at about eight o'clock one strong division advanced towards the street-battery that lay to the south of the town, and, taking possession of some of the houses on each side of the street, and resting their matchlocks on the sills of the windows, they took deliberate aim at the men in the battery.

* Orme.

The other two street-batteries were attacked at nearly the same time and in the like manner; but in that to the north there were several advantages favourable to the English: the street leading to it was very narrow, it was not overlooked by any very near building, and the houses closest at hand were all previously occupied by Englishmen. As the assailants entered the narrow street they were saluted with a fire in front from the two 18-pounders and the two field-pieces of the battery, and by a fire of musketry from the house windows. They presently recoiled: they advanced again, but only to retreat more rapidly than before, and then they lay out of harm's way in the cross-streets till the hour of noon, when they joined those who were employed against the eastern battery. But it was now rice-time, and the kettles were boiled, and there was no more fighting till after two o'clock. Then, however, the refreshed Indians commenced a most furious fire upon the eastern battery, crowding all the houses with their best marksmen. The Englishmen serving the guns could scarcely show themselves without being hit, and the number of killed or wounded constantly carried to the rear discouraged those who had not been over-valiant before. At five o'clock in the afternoon Captain Clayton, the officer in command, sent to inform Mr. Drake, the governor, that it was impossible to maintain the post any longer unless it was immediately reinforced with cannon and men sufficient to drive the enemy out of the houses. But before an answer could be received from the governor matters were brought to such a crisis that Captain Clayton thought it necessary to spike his two 18-pounders and one of his field-pieces, and to retreat with all that remained of his detachment into Fort William. The nabob's people, scarcely crediting their good fortune, took possession of the battery, and raised a shout of triumph from ten thousand throats. The fall of this battery was fatal to the whole scheme of defence; but the English troops in the northern battery and in the houses near it continued a desperate resistance. A small party under the command of two young volunteers—Smith and Wilkinson—were completely surrounded in a detached building; they bravely resolved to cut their way through, and some of them succeeded; but Smith, intercepted and refusing to surrender, killed five Indians before he fell; and Wilkinson, who surrendered, was cut to pieces. Towards evening the detachments were recalled into the fort, and all three batteries abandoned. The front of each of them was strewed with the dead; and, if only tolerable precautions had been adopted, they would certainly have sufficed to repel Suraj-u-Dowlah and his unwarlike rabble, or to have kept them at bay for weeks or even months. The abandonment of all the batteries on the very first day they were attacked created a general consternation: the Indian matchlock-men who had been engaged by the presidency all disappeared; the Lascars who had been helping to serve the guns all deserted; and the peace-loving Armenians and the Portuguese half-castes, who formed a considerable part of the militia, gave themselves up to grief and despair, declaring on every hand that further resistance was useless. Instead of the firm word of command and the rattle of arms, nothing was heard in Fort William but despondent murmurs, lamentations, and womanly wailings. The governor, however, contrived to throw four detachments into the English church, the government-house, and two houses belonging to English merchants, all which buildings commanded the ramparts of the fort.

In the meantime the enemy had drilled the three English guns which had been spiked and abandoned in the eastern battery, and they now turned these guns on the fort, and threw forward a swarm of combatants who sheltered themselves behind garden-walls and outhouses, and kept up an irregular but never-ceasing fire with matchlocks and muskets. A ship and seven smaller vessels were now lying before the fort, and shoals of native boats were in readiness to carry off persons and property. As it grew dark the European women were conveyed out of the fort and safely embarked. When this was done, or while it was doing, the detachment

which had been sent to occupy the government-house, and which had been severely galled by the enemy's fire, was recalled to the fort. This retreat exposed the very weakest part of the fort, where it was unflanked by any bastions; and about midnight the enemy, availing themselves of their advantage, approached to escalade the walls. Mr. Drake, who heard their approach, ordered the drums to beat the general alarm; but, although this summons was thrice repeated, not a man came up to the walls except those who were already on duty. The roll of the drums, however, proved enough for the Indians, who ran back from the foot of the walls into their own quarters, believing that the whole garrison was collected at one point to oppose them. No further attempt was made during the night, for the Indians, as usual, betook themselves to their suppers and their rest. In that precious interval of time a sortie from the fort made with rapidity and spirit might have thrown half of the nabob's army into irretrievable confusion; or, without that bold measure, a wonderful amount of human misery might have been spared if the English had removed quietly out of the untenable fortress and gone on board their ships. The latter project was, indeed, entertained; for, two hours after midnight, a general council of war was held, to which all the English, except the common soldiers, were admitted; and it was debated whether they should immediately escape to their ships, or defer their retreat until the next night. These deliberations lasted for two hours, when it was too late to go, and therefore they stayed where they were. As the day broke Suraj-u-Dowlah's people again swarmed to the fort, bringing more artillery with them, and occupying the houses and the garden enclosures near it. They did not, however, venture to take possession of the government-house, and a fresh detachment was sent out from the fort to re-occupy that building. These men, under Ensign Pischard, behaved with the greatest gallantry, occupying the house and killing a great number of those who attempted to dislodge them; but, unfortunately, the ensign was badly wounded and carried to the fort, and his departure was soon followed by the flight of his men. The party who had held the English church now gave way also, and all the other houses and every foot of ground outside Fort William were abandoned to the enemy, whose courage and activity seemed to increase prodigiously. From the water-gate of the fort there now arose a loud and earnest cry for boats; but the greater part of the native boatmen, tired with waiting, had taken their departure, and the general embarkation, which would have been easy a few hours before, became very difficult. This difficulty was made the greater by the madness of fear and the total want of all order or arrangement. Men, women, and children rushed to the water's edge, pressing every one to be first embarked; the boats were crowded with more than they could carry, and several of them were overset or swamped. Most of those who had crowded into them were drowned, and the few that swam or floated to the shore were either made prisoners or massacred; for the nabob's people had now taken possession of the river-side, and were even discharging fire-arrows at the English shipping in the view of destroying that last hope of escape. Of the parties from the garrison who had escorted the European ladies on board, none returned to the fort, and, their fright being increased by the fire-arrows, they, without orders from the governor, removed the ship from her station off the port to Govindpore, three miles lower down the river; on which all the other vessels weighed their anchors likewise, and began to fall down to Govindpore. Several of the English militia now lost all heart and all care except for their own personal safety; and, seizing by force some government-boats, they put off after the shipping. The governor himself (Mr. Drake) was not long in following them; he was told that nearly all the gunpowder remaining in the fort was damp and unfit for use; he was convinced in his own mind that the savage nabob intended to impale him; and, without giving any warning to the garrison, he ran out by the water-gate and leaped into a remaining boat. The military commanding officer

(Captain Minchin) and several other Englishmen, who chanced to have their eyes upon him, followed his example, scrambled into the boat after him, and escaped with him to the ship, in spite of the Indian fire-arrows and bullets. Those who were left behind, including many who would have escaped if they had been able, raised a cry of indignation and execration at the conduct of the governor and the companions of his flight. They next elected Mr. Holwell, one of the members of the council, to the command of the hopeless fort. The entire number of regulars and militia remaining within the walls did not exceed 190, and many of these were looking for the first opportunity to escape. As he saw two or three boats returning to the wharf, Mr. Holwell locked up the water-gate and carried off the keys, in order to prevent further desertion. There was still a ship lying off the mouth of the creek on which Perring's Redoubt stood. An officer was dispatched in a boat with orders to the captain to bring this ship down immediately to the fort, in order that the whole garrison might at a proper moment get on board; but the ship in coming down struck upon a sand-bank, and was instantly abandoned by her crew, who hastened in their boats to Govindpore. As this hope was frustrated the garrison saw themselves attacked with renewed vigour; and so active were the Indians, that they continued their efforts not only all that day, but nearly all the succeeding night. By the direction of Mr. Holwell signals were constantly thrown out, flags by day and fires by night, to call the shipping at Govindpore back to the fort; but no attention whatever was paid to these strong appeals to valour and generosity: the ships remained where they were, and merely sent a native boat up the river from time to time to see what was passing. Nothing but imbecility on the part of the commanders can account for this conduct in British seamen.

On the following morning the assailants crowded round the fort in still greater numbers. Some of the English who had seen how easy it was to scatter thousands with the well-directed fire of a single gun recommended steadiness and perseverance in the defence; but others recommended with equal earnestness an immediate capitulation, without reflecting that Suraj-u-Dowlah was the last man upon earth likely to observe any treaty, or to put any bounds to his wrath. Mr. Holwell at last consented to make his prisoner Omichund write a letter to one of the nabob's generals, stating that the English were ready to obey the nabob's commands, and were only defending the fort to preserve their lives and honour. This letter was carried into the Indian general's quarters, but it seemed to produce no effect, as the attack was continued and preparation made to escalade the walls. Advancing under cover of a strong fire from one of the neighbouring houses, a large party actually began to escalade the northern curtain of the fortress; but after persevering for half an hour they were hurled back and totally repulsed with great loss. But in this stern contest twenty-five of the garrison had been killed or desperately wounded, and more than twice that number had received slighter wounds. In this state, when the place was filled with moans and groans and shrieks of anguish, some of the remaining English soldiery broke open the arrack storehouse, swallowed that ardent spirit as if it had been water, and became mad or stupid. About two o'clock in the afternoon, after a very faint renewal of the attack, the Indians sent a flag of truce towards the fort; but while Mr. Holwell was parleying with the messenger, and the garrison suspending their fire, hosts of the nabob's people flocked to the gates of the fort, to the palisades, and to the weakest parts of the works, where they applied their scaling ladders and began again to ascend, firing at every one they saw. A gentleman was wounded at the side of Mr. Holwell, who thereupon broke off the conference and endeavoured to collect his men on the ramparts. But the men who were sober could not be brought up in time, and those who were mad drunk were breaking open the water-gate to escape by the river. As this gate was forced, a mass of Indians who had climbed over the palisade beyond it, and were lurking under the walls,

rushed in, and at the very same moment the curtain which had been attempted before was escaladed by hundreds after hundreds, who advanced into the centre of the works and there met their comrades who had entered by the water-gate. About twenty of the garrison threw themselves over the walls; all the rest piled their arms and surrendered with prayers for mercy.

At five in the afternoon Suraj-u-Dowlah, who had kept at a distance so long as there was any resistance or the slightest chance of danger, entered the fort in triumph, accompanied by Meer Jaffier, his treasurer and commander-in-chief, and by most of his principal officers. He seated himself with all his pomp in the principal hall of the factory, and ordered Mr. Holwell to be brought before him. He abused the English with Oriental richness of language for their presumption in daring to oppose his will and defend the fort, and he bitterly complained of the small sum of money he had found in their treasury—a sum which in reality fell below 50,000 rupees, while his ravenous imagination had anticipated many millions. He dismissed Mr. Holwell, recalled him to ask if there was no more money, and then dismisssed him again. Before seven o'clock he summoned the Englishman to his presence once more, and this time, in dismissing him, pledged his word as a soldier that he should suffer no harm.* Mr. Holwell returned to his companions in misfortune, whom he found surrounded by a strong guard and gazing upon a terrible conflagration which by accident or by design had been kindled in the houses outside the fort. Asking where they were to be lodged for the night, they were ordered to march to a veranda or open gallery near the eastern gate of the fort, where they remained for some time without any suspicion of their impending fate. But about eight o'clock at night the principal officer who had charge of them commanded them all to go into a room behind the gallery. This room was the common dungeon of the garrison, and called the Black Hole.

Many of the prisoners, knowing the narrowness of the place, imagined at first that the officer was joking, and, being in good spirits on account of the nabob's promise that no harm should be offered to them, they laughed at the absurdity of the notion; but when they perceived in the savage looks of the Indians that they were in earnest they began to expostulate and implore: upon which the officer ordered his men to cut down those who hesitated, and the captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword. The space was so thronged that the last could hardly find room to enter. The savages without then locked the door upon them; confining 146 persons in a room not twenty feet square, with only two small windows, and those obstructed and deprived of air by the projecting veranda. It was the very hottest season of the year, and the night unusually sultry even for that season, for the atmosphere was heated by the burning houses and charged with the smoke that proceeded from the conflagration. As soon as the dismal door was closed upon them the prisoners, crowded and wedged together in one living, desperate mass, began to feel all the unutterable horrors of their situation. They cried, they shrieked for mercy—they prayed to be removed to separate rooms, to any place but that—they attempted to burst open the door, but the door was strong and opened inward, and no impression could be made upon it or its fastenings. Mr. Holwell, having been one of the first to enter that infernal hole, had secured himself a place near one of the windows, and through the grating he addressed an old Hindu, "who bore some marks of humanity in his countenance," and promised him 1000 rupees in the morning if he would separate the captives into two chambers. The old man said he would go and endeavour to obtain permission; but he soon returned, saying that the thing could not be done—that it was impossible. Mr. Holwell offered him a larger sum—the old man went again—and again he soon returned, pronouncing, this time, the inevitable doom—for the nabob, he said, had retired to

* Holwell's Tracts.

rest and was fast asleep, and no man dared to wake or disturb him. Then the captives went raving mad with despair and a hell-like heat and thirst; they shrieked for water! water! and they fought with each other with maniac hands, feet, and teeth, for possession of the ground nearest the windows. The old Hindu, at the prayer of Mr. Holwell, brought some skins of water to the grating, but the sufferers were too far gone in madness to wait their turn to drink; they battled with one another like demons for the first draught, and they spilt and wasted more than was drunk. But the contents of the largest and coolest water-tank in Hindustan could not have quenched the inward fire that consumed them, or have cooled or sweetened the infernal air of their dungeon. They went madder and madder. To shorten their horrors, and to provoke the Indians outside in the veranda to fire upon them, they made use of every kind of invective and abuse; but the blacks kept up their torture, and, staring through the windows, shouted with laughter at the frantic tricks of the white men. By this time many of the captives had been squeezed or trodden to death, or had died for want of air. At two o'clock in the morning not more than fifty remained alive: but even this reduced number could not long live in that close and poisoned air, which was rendered every moment more loathsome by the almost instantaneous decomposition of the dead bodies. As the light of day glimmered through the narrow apertures the sight was too horrible to be borne; but the sun was allowed to rise high in the heavens before the tyrant quitted his soft and perfumed couch and inquired after his prisoners. At eight o'clock in the morning, after ascertaining that Mr. Holwell, whom he wished to question about money, was among the survivors, he sent an order to enlarge the captives. The narrow space was so blocked up with the dead lying one upon the other, and those who yet lived were so weak and faint, that it was with the greatest difficulty the door was opened and a passage made for egress. At length, however, twenty-three ghastly figures were brought out of that truly black hole—figures that would not have been recognised by the mothers that had borne them, or by the bosom friends that had seen them but a few hours before on the eve of their terrific incarceration. The dead, amounting to 123, were then dragged out and thrown promiscuously into a great pit outside the fort, and there covered in with earth and rubbish. Mr. Holwell, unable to stand, was carried to the presence of Suraj-u-Dowlah, who, so far from showing any compassion for his pitiable condition, or any remorse for the dreadful death of his companions, talked of nothing but the treasures which, he said, the English had buried; and he threatened further severities if the concealed money were not instantly given up. Mr. Holwell, who knew of no hidden treasures, was consigned over to some officers of the nabob, who put his sinking and emaciated frame into irons and fetters. Messrs. Court and Walcot underwent the same treatment, as they were suspected of knowing something of the hidden treasures which haunted the young tyrant's imagination, and which only existed there. Mr. Cooke, the secretary to the council, and Captain Mills, were told they might go wherever they chose; but an Englishwoman, the only one of her sex among the sufferers, was reserved for the harem of the Buckshee, or chief general, Meer Jaffier, who sent her off in a palanquin to his palace at Moorshedabad. Little or no attention was paid to the obscurer part of the survivors, who were allowed to quit the fort and descend the bank of the river towards Govindpore, where the English shipping still lay at anchor. But when they reached the point where they hoped to embark they found themselves obstructed by some of the nabob's troops, and they were fain to take shelter in some mud huts behind Govindpore, where some of the poor natives who had served the English in more prosperous times shed tears at their misfortunes and administered to their wants, in so far as their limited means permitted. Some three or four of the fugitives got, however, on board the ships, where the tale they told, con-

firmed by their own wretched appearance, filled every mind with horror and rage. In those moments of excitement vows of revenge were made that were afterwards but too faithfully executed: but for the present the stupid indecision and inactivity continued, and nothing was done or attempted by that naval force, which, small as it was, might have sufficed, under the direction of clear heads and brave hearts, to have saved all that were in Fort William.*

* "Never, perhaps," says Orme, "was such an opportunity of performing an heroic action so ignominiously neglected; for a single sloop, with fifteen brave men on board, might, in spite of all the efforts of the enemy, have come up, and anchoring under the fort, have carried away all who suffered in the dungeon."

[Obelisk built on the Site of the Black Hole, Calcutta, to commemorate the Murder of the One Hundred and Twenty-three Englishmen. From a Drawing in the India House.]

## CHAPTER V.

### CALCUTTA PLUNDERED BY THE NABOB.

MEANWHILE the nabob's army were plundering all the warehouses and dwelling-houses in the town of Calcutta, making no distinction as to persons, faiths, or nations, but robbing alike Hindus, Mohammedans, Armenians, Portuguese, and English. Their booty in merchandise and in household property was very considerable; but, like their nabob, they too had visions of hidden treasures, to realize which they in many instances tortured or barbarously maltreated their victims. If the intriguing Omichund had contributed to bring down the fury of the nabob on the settlement, he was nevertheless, in a pecuniary sense, one of the greatest sufferers from the invasion, for, as he had been prevented by the English from removing his effects, 400,000 rupees were found in his treasury, and vast quantities of merchandise in his stores; and all this wealth became the prey of the conquerors. Enraged at what he considered their wilful obstinacy in still refusing to tell where the great treasures in the fortress were hidden, Suraj-u-Dowlah ordered Mr. Holwell and his two companions in chains to be sent to Moorshedabad; and they were accordingly put into an open boat, without any shelter from the intense heat of the sun or the heavy rains of the season. They were fed only with thin rice and water, and were treated in all respects with excessive barbarity. To perpetuate the memory of his victory, which his courtiers represented as the greatest and most glorious that had been achieved since the days of Tamerlane, the nabob ordered the name of Calcutta to be changed to that of Alinagore, or the Port of God: and then, writing pompous letters to the Great Mogul at Delhi, and collecting his army on the 2nd of July, he proceeded up the river to fall upon his neighbour and near kinsman, the ruler of Purneah. His departure from Calcutta was made in triumphal style. His boats were decorated with flags and streamers, and the air was filled with military music. He left behind him in Fort William and in the town of Calcutta about 3000 men. As he passed by the French settlement at Chandernagore, and the Dutch settlement at Chinchura, which places lie close together on the right bank of the Hooghly, about thirty miles above Calcutta, he demanded tributes, and spoke at one moment as if he intended to complete his glorious career of victory by expelling both French and Dutch as he had expelled the English. The money demanded from the settlement at Chinchura, and promptly paid by the terrified Dutchmen, amounted to 450,000 rupees, but the French at Chandernagore he let off for 350,000 rupees, in consideration, it is said, of their having furnished him with 200 chests of gunpowder when he was advancing against the English at Calcutta.* On the 11th of July he arrived at Moorshedabad, where he gave a feast, and ordered that all kinds of property belonging to the English anywhere in Bengal or its dependencies should be seized and confiscated to his use; a few days after, finding that no information could be obtained from them respecting the supposed hidden treasures, he liberated Mr. Holwell and his two companions, who, since their arrival in his capital, had been confined in a cow-shed. These gentlemen were scarcely enlarged ere they discovered that the greatest discontents prevailed both among the soldiery and the people; that many persons of the greatest wealth and influence, more especially the Seits or Hindu bankers, were

* Orme.

convinced that the subversion of Calcutta and the ruin of the English would be destructive to the commercial prosperity of the country; that the arrogant nabob was detested even by those who most fawned upon him, and that many nearest to his person and highest in command of the troops were ready to plot and to combine for his overthrow and death.

The rainy season, which began before the nabob left Calcutta, and other circumstances, delayed the expedition into Purneah till the month of October. The nabob then marched with a large army, which was in reality commanded by Meer Jaffier, who obtained a complete victory over the rash young ruler of that country. This prince, the relative of Suraj-u-Dowlah, was slain in the battle; the whole of Purneah then submitted to the conqueror, who once more returned triumphantly to Moorshedabad, swollen with pride and elated by the conviction that nothing could resist him, and that the scattered and humbled English would never venture to renew hostilities in his dominions. But these dreams were soon to be dissipated, for Clive the avenger, Clive "the Daring in War," was now preparing to come against him.*

At Madras and Bombay, at every place in India in which there was an Englishman, exertions were made in order to recover Calcutta and take vengeance for the cruelties which had been committed; but the mighty monsoons would not yield nor change to suit the impatience of man; materials had to be collected from various parts of the coast, and ships to be waited for that were crossing the Indian Ocean from Europe. Thus it was not until the 16th of October that Clive and Admiral Watson could sail from Madras for the Hooghly. The force consisted of five of his majesty's ships and five of the company's, having on board 900 European infantry and 1500 sepoys. Five hundred more sepoys were expected from Bombay. All the fleet, with the exception of two vessels, the 'Cumberland' and 'Marlborough,' on board of which were a considerable proportion of the troops and stores, had reached Fulta, a village on the left bank of the Hooghly, twenty miles in a straight direction below Calcutta, but more than double that distance by water, by the 22d of December, where they found the fugitives from Calcutta. Major Kilpatrick was found at Fulta, where he had arrived some weeks after the capture of Fort William; but, having only a handful of men with him, he had not been able to undertake any enterprise, nor had he even succeeded in procuring draught oxen for the artillery, or proper information as to the nature and the state of defence of the neighbouring country. Although 250 of his small European force, 430 of his sepoys, and almost all his artillery and military stores were on board the missing ships, Clive resolved to advance immediately towards Calcutta, and to capture on his way the fort of Budge-Budge, a place on the left bank of the river. The road to this fort lay through a low swampy country, covered with jungle and underwood and intersected with gullies and ditches. It appears from Clive's letters that he had expected Admiral Watson would have landed him near to the fort; but this was not done, the troops being landed at Moidapore and thence marched through the wretched country. "The men," says Clive, "suffered hardships not to be described." They were obliged to draw their two field-pieces and their tumbrel loaded with ammunition through that dismal bog and across the ditches; and during their slow progress they were watched by spies, so that, instead of taking Budge-Budge by surprise, when they reached a dry hollow near that fort and laid themselves down after a night's march to take a little rest, they were suddenly attacked by the nabob's general Monichund, who had come down from Calcutta with 3000 horse and foot. But, after sustaining some loss, Clive beat off his assailants, and Monichund, having witnessed the death of four of his principal officers and of a fine war elephant, and having received a bullet in his own turban, fled back to Calcutta and left Budge-Budge to its fate. The garrison fled out of the place by night, leaving their artillery and stores behind them.

* The name of "Sabut Jung," or "The Daring in War," was given to Clive by the natives, and was applied to him by Suraj-u-Dowlah himself.

Monichund was so terror-stricken that he remained only a few hours at Calcutta, and then continued his flight to Moorshedabad, to assure the nabob, who had no more courage than himself, that "The Daring in War" was irresistible. Monichund, however, left a large garrison behind him in Fort William, and he had conjured them to defend the place against the English.

On the 2d of January (1757) Admiral Watson brought his ships to anchor off the fort; and a very few shot were sufficient to send the garrison scampering off after their general. Without the loss of a single life, apparently without a wound or a scratch, the English regained possession of the fort and town. Clive, who had come up with his troops, and who took possession of the fortress, recommended an instant attack upon Hooghly, where Suraj-u-Dowlah had stationed a considerable army; but hot disputes broke out between Clive and Watson, and generally between the officers in the company's service and the officers who commanded the king's troops, and who, inferior as was their force, seem to have assumed on all occasions the rights of precedence and superiority. The success of the whole expedition and the fortunes of the English would more than once have been irretrievably committed but for the iron will and daring, the unflinching spirit of Clive, who was ever ready to take upon himself all responsibility, and to answer for every consequence.

At length, on the 10th of January, a part of the fleet, and a detachment of the land troops under the command of Major Coote, arrived off Hooghly, which bristled with batteries mounting heavy guns, and garrisoned by 3000 men—who all fled after a very short cannonade, and left the place with everything in it to the English. So perfect was the panic of the nabob's troops, that Coote, with only fifty Europeans and one hundred sepoys, scoured the country for several miles, destroying or capturing a vast quantity of rice and other provisions. The sepoys were left to garrison Hooghly, and the Europeans returned to Calcutta on the 19th of January, with a booty estimated at a lac and a half of rupees. Suraj-u-Dowlah had by this time collected an enormous army in Moorshedabad, and, believing Clive's force to be even smaller than it was, he began to march down to Calcutta with terrible menaces. The English had not neglected to prepare for his reception, and determining not to be cooped up in the crazy fortress, Clive had fortified a camp with several good posts around it, about a mile to the north of the town and half a mile from the bank of the river. The camp was almost surrounded by a lake, a marsh, and artificial ditches, and no army coming from the northward could get into the town without passing close to it. Fortunately the arrival of the 'Marlborough' at the end of the month furnished Clive with the artillery and stores that were wanting.

On the 30th of January the nabob crossed the river about ten miles above Hooghly, and, as he continued his march, the country people, who had hitherto supplied the English camp and city with provisions, hid their stores and fled. The bullock-drivers also disappeared, and Clive was left without oxen, and with only one horse, which had been brought from Madras. The want of a small body of cavalry was sensibly felt on many occasions. In the course of the 30th, Clive wrote a conciliatory letter to the nabob, proposing peace; Suraj-u-Dowlah returned a courteous answer, but continued his march. The French at Chandernagore had, however, declined joining the native army, and had even made proposals to the English for a constant truce between them in Bengal notwithstanding any war between the two crowns in Europe and other parts of the world. On the 3rd of February all the villages to the north-east were seen in flames, and the van of the nabob's army appeared in full march towards Calcutta. They passed along a causeway, or elevated road, in full view of Clive's camp, and about noon some of their plunderers penetrated into a suburb of Calcutta occupied by poor natives; but a sally from Perring's Redoubt drove back these marauders with loss, and nothing more on the offensive was done during the rest of the day by the nabob's army, who intrenched themselves in a large garden, about a mile to

the south-east of the English camp. About an hour before dark Clive advanced with the greatest part of his troops and six field-pieces, and attempted to drive them from the garden with a hot cannonade; but they answered his fire with nine heavy guns, they threw out cavalry to harass his flanks, and as it grew dark he retired to his camp, having lost three sepoys and two artillery-men. The nabob, who was still several miles off, continued his attempt to amuse Clive with negotiations, and on the following morning a letter was delivered from him requesting the attendance of some English deputies at a village six miles from Calcutta, in order to arrange the conditions of peace. Messrs. Walsh and Scrafton forthwith set out for the place designated; but when they got there they found that the nabob was gone. He had in fact traversed his far-extending army, and had now lodged himself, with some of the best of his troops, in a house and walled garden belonging to Omichund, situated in the north-east part of the company's territory, and within the Mahratta ditch. Messrs. Walsh and Scrafton followed him to this place, and, after some violent altercation about delivering up their swords, which they resolutely refused to do, they were admitted to an audience. Suraj-u-Dowlah, stern and stately, was seated on the musnud, and was surrounded by the principal of his officers and the tallest and grimmest of his attendants, who, to impress awe, and to look more stout and truculent, had dressed themselves in wadded garments and put enormous turbans on their heads. During the conference these fellows sat scowling at the two Englishmen, as if they only waited the nabob's nod to murder them. Nevertheless, the Englishmen remonstrated with the nabob upon his thus entering the company's territory, and delivered to him a paper containing the conditions upon which Clive would make peace with him. Without replying, Suraj-u-Dowlah broke up the assembly. As Walsh and Scrafton were leaving the hall, Omichund, that wily and inexplicable Hindu, whispered them in the ear to have a care of their lives; adding, with a significant look, that the nabob's cannon had not yet been brought up to that position. Instead of going as ordered to the tent of the nabob's minister, the two Englishmen ordered their attendants to extinguish the torches; and then they fled through the darkness and confusion to Perring's Redoubt, whence they easily found their way to the camp. Clive instantly determined to attack the nabob the following morning. At midnight 600 sailors, armed with firelocks, were landed from the ships of war; the battalion of Europeans were 650, the artillery-men 100, the sepoys 800, the field-pieces six 6-pounders.* "About three o'clock in the morning," says Clive himself, "I marched out nearly my whole force, leaving only a few Europeans, with 200 new-raised bucksarees, to guard our camp. About six we entered the enemy's camp in a thick fog, and crossed it in about two hours, with considerable execution. Had the fog cleared up, as it usually does, about eight o'clock, when we were entire masters of the camp without the ditch, the action must have been decisive; instead of which, it thickened and occasioned our mistaking the way."† When this fog cleared up, Clive, with a portion of his small army, found himself wholly separated and at a considerable distance from the rest; and in this state he had to sustain the attack of a great portion of the nabob's forces, horse, foot, and artillery—and among the horse were some well-mounted and well-accoutred Persians, who did unusual execution before they wheeled and fled. In this conflict Clive lost altogether, two field-pieces, 120 Europeans, and 100 sepoys—a great proportion of his small force. But the carnage committed by the English, who were mad for revenge on the perpetrators of the black-hole murders, was terrible; the panic in the Indian army was universal, and Clive was not disappointed as to the effects likely to be produced on the feeble mind of the nabob by the battle. On the next day Suraj-u-Dowlah quitted the town and the territory of the company, and encamped on a plain six miles off. Clive was pre-

* Orme.

† Clive's letter to the Secret Committee, in Sir John Malcolm's Life.

paring to give him battle again, when he received a humble note in which the nabob proposed or prayed for peace. Admiral Watson, insisting that no reliance was to be placed on his good faith, recommended another attack without loss of time; but Clive thought it more prudent to treat and to secure the extensive advantages which had already been obtained. He had no more reliance on the good faith of the Indian prince than had the admiral; but he was fully prepared to play off deception against deception, to watch events, and to finish the ruin of Suraj-u-Dowlah, whose name inspired every Englishman with horror, whenever the conjuncture should be favourable. He was the more eager to treat as he knew that the French at Chandernagore were now fully informed of the commencement of hostilities in Europe between France and England, and as he apprehended that, in spite of their recent professions, they might be induced to take the field for the nabob, who, if driven to extremities, would be sure to tempt them with the most splendid offers. Even 40,000 Hindus and Mohammedans, under ignorant native officers and a coward like Suraj-u-Dowlah, might be despised; but Clive felt that the case would be different if they should be joined by 400 or 500 brave and expert Frenchmen. He therefore responded with alacrity to the nabob's pacific proposals; and in a day or two a treaty was concluded as favourable to the English as if they had dictated all its clauses. Suraj-u-Dowlah restored to the English at Calcutta all the villages he had seized, permitted their merchandise to pass custom-free, agreed to their fortifying Calcutta, allowed them to establish a mint, and engaged that all goods taken from their factories should be restored, and that money compensation should be given for such as had been damaged, destroyed, or lost.* This treaty was concluded on the 9th of February, and three days after the nabob, who now wished, or pretended to wish, for an alliance offensive and defensive with the English, whom he had so recently vowed to exterminate, entered into another agreement with Clive, by which the English engaged to look upon the nabob's enemies as their own, and to grant him any aid in their power.* Yet the nabob had scarcely signed these papers and gotten back in safety to his capital, when he opened a fresh correspondence with the French at Chandernagore, and even sent emissaries to Golconda to invite M. Bussy into Bengal, where he promised him and his troops higher rewards than any they could now hope for in the Deccan. He said that there would be no

* Sir John Malcolm's Life of Clive.—Orme.

* This peace, severely censured by many of the English in India, was thus justified by Clive himself in a private letter written at the time:—"If I had only consulted the interest and reputation of a soldier, the conclusion of this peace might easily have been suspended. I know, at the same time, there are many who think I have been too precipitate in the conclusion of it; but surely those who are of this opinion never knew that the delay of a day or two might have ruined the company's affairs, by the junction of the French with the nabob, which was on the point of being carried into execution. They never considered the situation of affairs on the coast, and the positive orders sent me by the gentlemen there to return with the major part of the forces at all events; they never considered that, with a war upon the coast and in the province of Bengal at the same time, a trading company could not subsist without a great assistance from the government; and, last of all, they never considered that a long war, attended through the whole course of it with success and many great actions, ended at last with the expense of more than fifty lacs of rupees to the company. Believe me, sir, I have constantly had this consideration in view, and my conduct has been always regulated agreeably to it. I can further say I never undertook an expedition attended with half so many disagreeable circumstances as this: the natural jealousy subsisting between the sea and land service has given me much uneasiness; I have suffered many mortifications; the independent power given me by the gentlemen of the committee at Madras has created me many enemies; and lastly, that attention which, by my public station, I owe to the interests of the company, in preference to that of private individuals, has not passed by unreflected upon. I am a very considerable sufferer myself; and I can affirm with great truth and sincerity that I have left no means untried with the nabob, when the company's interest was not immediately concerned, to induce him to consider the unhappy people at Calcutta, and he has often promised me to do it. Nothing harsh, ungenerous, or uncharitable shall fall from my pen; at the same time, in justice to the company, I cannot avoid expressing my concern at the future prospect of their affairs, after the obtainment of such honourable and advantageous conditions."—*Letter to Mr. Payne, in Sir John Malcolm's Life of Clive.*

limits to his gratitude, or to the prosperity and grandeur of the French, if they would only lend him a helping hand to crush the insolent English once and for ever. These secret correspondences were betrayed by the nabob's own ministers and agents, and Clive, who was supposed to know nothing of them, was fully informed of every particular. It appears that Omichund, who had been a great loser by the sacking of Calcutta and the entire interruption to trade, and who had not yet been able to recover the compensation which the nabob had promised him, was now as hostile to Suraj-u-Dowlah as he had been to the English presidency; and that by himself, or by his numerous friends and dependents, he acted as a spy at Moorshedabad, as he had formerly done at Calcutta. But his views and plans shifted and varied with circumstances, and it was impossible to judge, by his conduct on one day, what that conduct would be on the morrow. Like an expert juggler, he puzzled or deceived all parties at once, and bewildered the judgment of those whom he was actually serving for the time.

The English felt that there would be no permanent security for Calcutta or any other place on the Hooghly so long as the French were left in possession of Chandernagore; and the presidency of Madras had recommended the capture of that place to Clive, who turned his attention in that direction as soon as he had concluded his treaty with Suraj-u-Dowlah. He thought it, however, necessary to ask the nabob's permission for the attack, and this served as a test of Suraj-u-Dowlah's good faith. Receiving evasive answers, Clive hurried on the preparations for the assault. The French now repeated their desire for a truce with him. "But," wrote Clive, "I have given it as my opinion to proceed and invest the place, and, if it should happen at last that the nabob is really against taking it, to accept the neutrality, and make merit of doing it at his request and in obedience to his order, by which means he will be convinced of our friendship and power at the same time."* On the 1st of March he instructed Mr. Watts, who was again residing at Moorshedabad, to inform the nabob that he felt the greatest reluctance to attack the French without his consent, but that he hoped that this permission might be obtained from one who was now his friend and ally. Admiral Watson joined in representing to the nabob that it was essential to his own interest, as much as to the safety of the English, that the French should be rooted out of Chandernagore. The admiral further stated that the French on the Hooghly could not engage for their countrymen on the coast of Coromandel; that the governor of Pondicherry might at any time break any truce between them and the English at Calcutta; that, if a superior French force arrived at Chandernagore, Calcutta would be assuredly attacked; and, finally, that the French were not only talking of such reinforcements by sea, but also reporting that M. Bussy was marching from the Deccan into Bengal.* "Is it," wrote the English seaman, "to attack you? Is it to attack us? You are going to Patna. You ask our assistance. Can we, with the least degree of prudence, march with you, and leave our enemies behind us? You will then be too far off to support us, and we shall be unable to defend ourselves. Think what can be done in this situation. I see but one way. Let us take Chandernagore, and secure ourselves from any apprehensions from that quarter; and then we will assist you with every man in our power, and go with you even to Delhi, if you will. Have we not sworn reciprocally that the friends and enemies of the one should be regarded as such by the other? And will not God, the avenger of perjury, punish us if we do not fulfil our oaths? What can I say more? Let me request the favour of your speedy answer."† But the answer was a fresh evasion, and the nabob even ventured to detach some troops to the neighbourhood of Chandernagore as if to assist the French. Losing all patience,

* Letter to Mr. Payne, in Sir John Malcolm's Life of Clive.

* The distance of the northern part of the country ceded to Bussy was only about 200 miles from Calcutta.

† From a letter given by Sir John Malcolm in Life of Clive.

Watson wrote again to the equivocator, telling him that Clive had received more men, that more troops and ships were expected, and that, if he, the nabob, failed to act up to his engagements, he would kindle such a fire in his dominions that all the water in the Ganges should not be able to extinguish it. "Farewell!" added the sailor; "remember that he who promises you this never yet broke his word with you or with any man whatsoever." This concise rhetoric terrified Suraj-u-Dowlah, who, by a note dated the 10th of March, gave, though in general and vague terms, the required assent to the attack upon Chandernagore. "You have understanding and generosity," wrote the nabob to the admiral: "if your enemy, with an upright heart, claims your protection, you will give him his life, but then you must be well satisfied of the innocence of his intentions; if not, whatsoever you think right, that do." Yet, all the while, he was making advances of money to the French, and urging the advance of M. Bussy. A day or two after he gave to Mr. Watts, in words plainer than those used to the admiral, a verbal assent; but he told the same resident that the attack must not be thought of, as M. Bussy was on his road and marching through Cuttack. But the information respecting Bussy, which afterwards proved not to be true, made Watson and Clive hasten their blow. On the 14th of March the English fleet was anchored near Chandernagore, and Clive began the attack by land with all his characteristic spirit and intelligence. The place was not unprepared. As soon as the French knew that war was certain they blew up all the houses that overlooked their works, and made out of the materials a glacis. The fort, about thirty yards from the river, was a square, with four bastions, each mounting ten guns; several more guns were mounted in different parts of the ramparts, and eight upon a ravelin towards the river: all these were heavy pieces, from 24 to 32-pounders; and six of smaller calibre were planted on the terrace of a church within the fort, which overlooked the walls. Beyond the glacis the French had erected several batteries to sweep the approaches to the fort by land, and one battery of superior strength to command the river. Moreover, to prevent the near approach of the English men-of-war, they had sunk several ships in the river. The garrison was 900 strong, 300 being French regulars, 300 French inhabitants well trained as militia, and the rest French sailors and sepoys. They expected to be assisted by the detachment from the nabob's army which lay within or upon the skirts of their little territory; but Nuncomar, who commanded those troops, had a private understanding with Omichund and the English, and withdrew before the siege began. In one short day's work Clive drove in all the French outposts and forced them to abandon and spike the guns of one of the best of their outer batteries. On the morning of the 15th the French abandoned all their other outer batteries except the one on the river. On the 16th Clive brought into position his own heavy artillery and began to cannonade: on the 17th and 18th he threw some shells from a cohorn and a mortar; and on the 19th the 'Kent,' 'Tiger,' and 'Salisbury' came to anchor within a mile of the fort, and began to remove the obstructions from the bed of the river. With great skill and industry a way was opened through the sunken ships; and on the 23rd the three men-of-war presented their formidable broadsides to the fort. On the following morning a terrible battering was begun both by land and water; but the French responded with so much celerity that they seemed to have the better until about sunset, when the 'Tiger' came opposite the ravelin and knocked it to pieces with one broadside. The 'Salisbury' hardly came into action at all, but the 'Kent,' Admiral Watson's ship, fought closer to the bastions than was intended, so that several of her people were killed or wounded as she was shifting her ground, and she was allowed to run out her cable and fall into a very disadvantageous position. Watson, however, instead of hauling off, determined to decide the contest at those close quarters, and he thundered at one of the bastions. On both sides every shot told, and the 'Kent' suffered severely. But at the same time Clive's land-batteries kept up

a cross fire on the bastion, and the 'Tiger' continued to pour in her broadsides. At nine o'clock in the morning, when nearly all their guns were silenced, the French hoisted a flag of truce, and proposed a surrender to Admiral Watson. Captain Coote was sent on shore to arrange the terms. Fifty of the best French soldiers, with twenty Topasses and several officers, stole out of the fort before anything was settled, and marched away to the northward. At three o'clock the rest capitulated and remained prisoners of war. The acquisition of this important place had not been obtained without serious loss: in the 'Tiger' the master and 14 others were killed and 56 wounded; the 'Kent' had received six shots in her masts and 142 in her hull; the first lieutenant, Mr. Perrot, and 18 of the crew, were killed, and 72 wounded. In the last decisive attack Clive had only 1 man killed and 10 wounded; but before the ships came into action he had lost between 20 and 30 in killed and wounded. During the siege the nabob had addressed several letters to the English, commanding them in imperious language to desist; and he had even dispatched another division of his army under Roydullub to make them raise the siege. But when within 20 miles of Chandernagore Roydullub was met by Nuncomar, who assured him that his advance was useless, for that Chandernagore must fall before he could reach it.

All intentions and schemes on the part of the nabob were more changeable than an April sky or the hues of the chameleon. Just as he received the news of the capture of the French settlement, intelligence was brought him that the Patans, in conjunction with a Mahratta army, were about to invade Behar and Bengal. He had already requested the aid of the English against these much redoubted warriors from the north; but, as they had delayed their invasion, he had been indulging in the hope that the danger was blown over, and that he might be able not only to maintain himself without the assistance of the English, but also to curb their encroachments. Even now the information respecting the Patans was incorrect; but, believing it to be true, and his own danger imminent, he wrote letters of congratulation to Admiral Watson and Colonel Clive, expressing the strongest desire to remain in friendship and alliance with them, and offering the territory of Chandernagore to the English on the same terms as those on which it had been held by the French company; but he ordered the division of his army which had marched with Roydullub to continue at Plassey, on the island of Cossimbuzar, thirty miles to the south of Moorshedabad.* Clive, whose suspicions never slumbered, and whose secret agents were constantly conveying to him fresh doubts of Suraj-u-Dowlah's sincerity, was disquieted by the position taken up by his army, and was greatly offended at the nabob's giving refuge and protection to the French soldiers and Topasses who had escaped from Chandernagore, and who must have been captured by an English detachment sent after them, if the nabob's troops had not prevented it. Clive demanded peremptorily that these fugitives, who were now under the command of M. Law, an officer of some ability,† should be given up to him as prisoners of war, and that all the settlements and factories that remained to the French in Bengal should be surrendered to the English. Suraj-u-Dowlah returned a civil but evasive answer to these demands; but, to dissipate the ill will of the English, he chose this moment for fulfilling part of his treaty, and paid over 450,000 rupees as an instalment to Calcutta. Leaving a good garrison in Chandernagore, and the greater part of the army cantoned in the neighbourhood, Clive and Watson returned to Calcutta with a booty estimated at 100,000*l.* The presidency of Madras, apprehensive of an attack by the French from Pondicherry and from Europe, wrote pressing letters to recall Clive to the Coromandel coast: but he, being fully convinced that the work was not yet finished in Bengal, determined to remain where he was.

* Orme.

† This Law, who had previously been serving in the Carnatic against Clive and Laurence, was a son or nephew of the celebrated Scotch financier, Law, who had driven all France mad with the famous Mississippi scheme, the parent of the South Sea scheme, which had produced an equal madness in England.

Not only with Clive, but with every Englishman at Calcutta who had witnessed or suffered the nabob's perfidy and cruelty, it was a confirmed belief that there could be no permanent security in Bengal until Suraj-u-Dowlah was driven from the musnud, and made as quiet as his sacrifices of the black-hole, that were sleeping in the great pit under the walls of Fort William. Clive had all along insisted that there should be no rest or pause until the French were destroyed root and branch, and he had also foreseen that this operation would be opposed to the utmost by the nabob: he had written to the committee at Calcutta—"If you attack Chandernagore, you cannot stop there; you must go further. Having established yourself by force, and not by the consent of the nabob, he, by force, will endeavour to drive you out again."

The invasion of the Patans was stayed by the payment of large sums of money by Suraj-u-Dowlah, who, after the fall of Chandernagore, as before the commencement and during the progress of the siege, continued to call upon M. Bussy, whose reported march into Cuttack proved a mere fable. Several of his letters to the French general were intercepted at the time they were written, and copies of others were found upon his person afterwards, when he was dethroned and a prisoner at Moorshedabad. In fact, no proof was wanting of his treachery and double dealing. In one of these letters to Bussy he said that he hoped he would come with 2000 brave men well supplied with muskets to free him from "The Daring in War" (Clive), for whose destruction he fervently prayed. In another epistle, written after the fall of Chandernagore, and nearly on the same day on which he pretended to congratulate the English commanders on that event, he said to Bussy—"I am advised that you have arrived at Echapore. This news gives me pleasure; the sooner you come here, the greater satisfaction I shall have in meeting you. What can I write of the perfidy of the English? They have, without ground, picked a quarrel with M. Renault, and taken by force his factory. They want now to quarrel with M. Law, your chief at Cossimbuzar; but I will take care to oppose and overthrow all their proceedings. When you come to Ballasore, I will then send M. Law to your assistance, unless you forbid his setting out. Rest assured of my good will towards you and your company."* In the same letter he added that he had issued his mandates to the governors of his provinces through which Bussy was to march to supply him with everything he needed, and to co-operate with him to the extent of their power. It was also known that he had sent servants with an elephant and jewels through Ballasore to meet M. Bussy, and that he was actually keeping in his pay M. Law, whose force had been raised to above a hundred French, through broken paroles and flights from the English camp. The presidency of Calcutta were long kept in ignorance as to Bussy's movements, not knowing with any accuracy whether he was advancing into Bengal or was still in Golconda, or was quartered in the Northern Circars; but no doubt was entertained that his junction with the nabob would be fatal to the English interest. Explanations were demanded over and over again by Mr. Watts, the resident at Moorshedabad, by Colonel Clive, and by Admiral Watson; but the only answers were subterfuges and equivocations, and Suraj-u-Dowlah's behaviour gave every day some fresh cause for disgust. When he knew for certain that the Patans had retired beyond Delhi, and when he fancied that the French must surely be coming, he again threatened Mr. Watts with impalement, withheld the money which he was bound to pay to Calcutta, broke the treaty in other respects, interdicted the carrying of ammunition and provisions into the English fort and factory at Cossimbuzar, and threatened to cut off the ears and nose of every subject that dared to contravene his orders. He also kept his army on foot at Plassey, reinforcing it from time to time, until nearly every man, horse, elephant, musket, firelock, and cannon he possessed was collected at that commanding point. Mr. Watts, soon

* The nabob's letters, as given by Orme.

after his return to Moorshedabad, had discovered that the nabob was loved as little there as he was at Calcutta, and that a large portion of his ministers, officers, and courtiers were ripe for conspiracy and revolt. These discoveries had been communicated in detail, by Watts, to Clive, to Watson, and to the members of the council, who all, without any hesitation, agreed with him that the conspirators should be encouraged and assisted, and that no means, however dark, or however contrary to the more honourable tenor of modern European policy, should be neglected to destroy that prince. What there was of iniquity in this scheme was certainly not wholly attributable to Clive, but shared with him by Watts and Watson and a dozen others. It seems, indeed, that not an Englishman in India was averse to the scheme, which, in its execution, necessarily involved other iniquities: and Clive was afterwards made to bear more than his due share of the blame, because he was the most forward and energetic in working out the scheme, which all the rest had agreed upon and approved. In a private letter he vividly described the conduct of the nabob, and repeated what he had often said before, that, if the English power were to be preserved in India, no terms must be kept with him. "One day," says he, "he tears my letters and turns out my vakeel, and orders his army to march; he next countermands it, sends for the vakeel, and begs his pardon for what he has done. Twice a week he threatened to impale Mr. Watts; in short, he is a compound of everything that is bad, keeps company with none but his menial servants, and is universally hated and despised by the great men. This induces me to acquaint you there is a conspiracy going on against him by several of the great men, at the head of whom is Jugget Seit himself, as also Cojah Wazeed. I have been applied to for assistance, and every advantage promised the company can wish. The committee are of opinion it should be given as soon as the nabob is secured. For my own part, I am persuaded there can be neither peace nor security while such a monster reigns. Mr. Watts and Omichund are at Moorshedabad, and have many meetings with the great men. The last letter I received from Mr. Watts he desires that our proposals may be sent, and that they only wait for them to put everything into execution; so that you may shortly expect to hear of a revolution which will put an end to all French expectations of ever settling in this country again. The Patans, who were coming this way, have been pacified by a sum of money, and are returning to their own country. Had they approached near, everything would have been overset in this country, from three-fourths of the nabob's army being against him. It is a most disagreeable circumstance to find that the troubles are likely to commence again: but the opinion here is universal that there can be neither peace nor trade without a change of government." * Jugget Seit, named by Clive as being at the head of the plot, was the greatest banker in Bengal, and he possessed immense influence in the neighbouring kingdom of Oude, and even in the Mogul's court at Delhi, by means of his wealth and his connexion with the other great Hindu seits, or bankers, who, under the Mohammedan conquerors, as under their native princes, monopolised the business of revenue and finance in every part of India. Other Hindus, both civil and military, in the service of Suraj-u-Dowlah, were leagued with Jugget Seit,—as Monichund, the late governor of Calcutta, who had fought Clive in the hollow near Budge-Budge; Ramnarrain, the governor of the province of Patna; Rajaram, the manager of Midnapore; and Roydullub, the dewan, or minister of finance. But the real chief of the conspiracy, or he who was to gain the most by it, was Meer Jaffier Khan, a Mohammedan soldier of fortune, who had been raised to the highest dignities by the late nabob Aliverdy Khan, whose daughter he had married. Meer Jaffier was at this moment commander-in-chief of the army assembled at Plassey, and it was calculated that half of that force would implicitly obey his orders. His object was nothing short of the throne

* Letter from Clive to Pigot.

and dominions of his master. That adept in intrigue, Omichund, was admitted into the secret at an early stage, and was employed both by the Hindus and the English to forward the conspiracy and to bargain with Meer Jaffier. Though suspicious, like all Eastern despots, Suraj-u-Dowlah entertained so little doubt of the fidelity of Meer Jaffier that he was offering him ten lacs of rupees if he would go down to Calcutta and exterminate the English. On the other hand, Clive wrote to recommend firmness and perseverance to Meer Jaffier, telling him that when all was ready he would march to his assistance with 5000 men who never turned their backs. To lull the nabob into security the English troops were all sent into quarters, and the artillery and tumbrils were warehoused in Calcutta as if the war were considered at an end for that season. But Clive then demanded from the nabob that he should break up his camp at Plassey, remit another instalment of the money owing, and fulfil other articles of the treaty. As was foreseen, Suraj-u-Dowlah replied to these demands, sometimes by equivocations, and at others by menaces or a haughty defiance; and the plot against him went on with additional vigour:—Mr. Watts was fully authorised to conclude a treaty with the aspirant to the musnud; and Admiral Watson, though entertaining serious doubts as to the success of the daring enterprise, agreed to send 200 of his seamen to act with the land troops at Plassey, or Moorshedabad, or wherever the star of Clive might lead them. Everything on the part of the English was ready for taking the field, when the conspiracy was nearly broken up by a sudden and violent quarrel between Meer Jaffier and the nabob; but Meer Jaffier, who only a few days before had solemnly sworn on the Koran, and by God and the Prophet of God, to keep his engagements with Mr. Watts, took the same solemn oaths to be faithful to his prince; and Suraj-u-Dowlah received him back into his confidence and continued him in the command at Plassey. But this alarm was scarcely over when a new one was created by the perplexing conduct and excessive cupidity of Omichund. Meer Jaffier very soon regretted that the wily Hindu had been admitted into all the secrets of the plot; and Mr. Watts agreed with him in the opinion that Omichund would make everything subservient to his own avarice, and would be ready to sacrifice every member of the confederacy if he should see a prospect of greater gain with security to himself. The Hindu, who was in body and soul one mass of intrigue and deception, would not be satisfied with following the directions of others, but was always inventing manœuvres of his own, some of which were quite unintelligible to the other less imaginative conspirators. One day he waited upon the nabob and told him that he had an important secret to communicate which might cost him his life: the nabob promised him secrecy; on which he told him the English had sent two gentlemen to Ganjam to consult with M. Bussy; that the French and English had made peace together; and that M. Bussy was coming down to join Clive.* The motive for this lie was seen through, for it gained him favour with Suraj-u-Dowlah, who was fool enough to believe it, and who gave Omichund an order for a considerable sum of money which he owed to him. At the same time Cojah Wazeed reported to Mr. Watts other particulars of Omichund's conduct, which were calculated to astonish, if not to alarm, all the members of the confederacy. But when all was ready the complex traitor took a bolder step, which was at least clear and intelligible to every capacity. With his demure face and supple form he waited upon Mr. Watts, and told him that he would discover the whole plot to the nabob unless it was settled that he should receive thirty lacs of rupees, to reimburse him for past losses, and to reward him for his present services. Watts, who had become familiar with treachery and baseness of all kinds, concealed his emotions, flattered the Hindu that his wishes would be complied with, and then wrote to Clive to denounce the villain and to consult as to the best mode of proceeding with him. Clive was of opinion

* Letter from Mr. Watts to Clive.

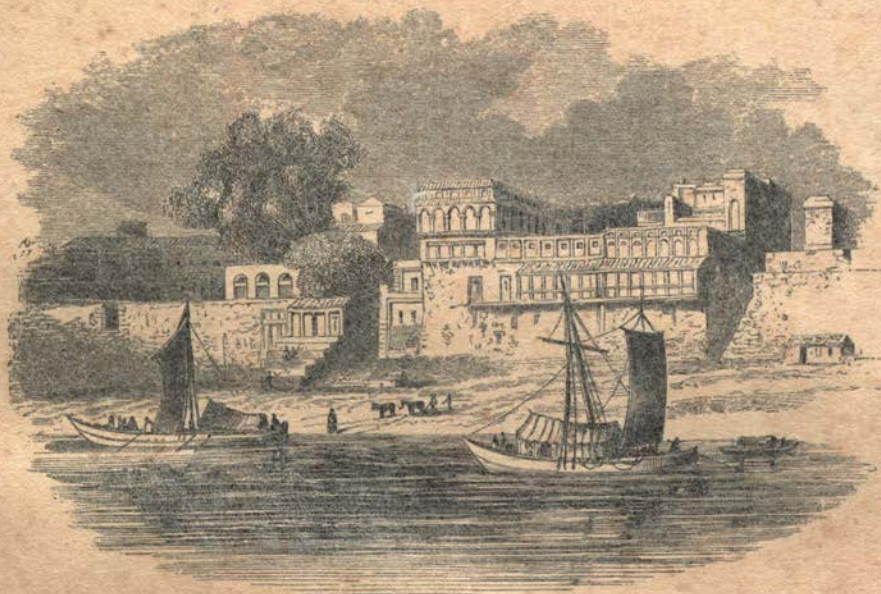
that the treachery ought to be met and defeated by treachery; that Omichund ought to be deceived by a fictitious agreement to pay him the money: and it appears that the members of the council, and most if not all the English officers at Calcutta, concurred with Clive, who replied to Mr. Watts:—"I immediately repaired to Calcutta, and at a committee held both the admiral and gentlemen agree that Omichund is the greatest villain upon earth; and that now he appears in the strongest light, what he was always suspected to be, a villain in grain. However, to counterplot this scoundrel, and at the same time to give him no room to suspect our intentions, enclosed you will receive two forms of agreement; the one real, to be strictly kept by us, the other fictitious. In short, this affair concluded, Omichund will be treated as he deserves. This you will acquaint Meer Jaffier with." Accordingly two treaties were drawn up; one real upon white paper, and the other fictitious upon red. In the former there was no mention of Omichund; the latter had an article which expressly stipulated that he should receive twenty lacs of rupees; and Mr. Watts was desired to inform him that "thirty lacs was not inserted, as it might give rise to suspicion; but that a commission of five per cent. should be given to him upon all sums received from the nabob, which would fully amount to the other ten lacs." Though Admiral Watson agreed to the expediency of this juggle, it is said by various writers that he indignantly refused being a party to the fraud, or putting his name to the false red paper. Clive, however, solemnly affirmed afterwards, before a committee of the House of Commons, that the admiral objected to the signing of it, but, to the best of his remembrance, gave the gentleman who carried it (Mr. Lushington) leave to put his name upon it.* It has recently been asserted in the broadest manner that Clive himself forged Watson's name on the document without his consent,† but no evidence is adduced to prove the fact, which seems to us open to every kind of doubt. Mr. Lushington, or any member of the council which agreed to the deception, was more likely to forge the signature than Clive, who was no penman. But in reality it matters very little who wrote Watson's name if they all agreed that it must be written in order to complete the deception. Omichund would not have been satisfied with the sham treaty if Watson's name had not been to it; and if that determined Hindu had conceived any suspicion, and had realised his threats of disclosing all he knew to Suraj-u-Dowlah, Mr. Watts, Mr. Scrafton, Meer Jaffier, every Englishman, and every native concerned in the plot and within the nabob's power, would inevitably have met a horrible death; and the company would have lost all that they had gained at so much cost—would have been ruined or exterminated in Bengal. Such at least was the deep conviction of Clive, of Watts, of Watson, of every member of the presidency, of every Englishman in the country, who, each and all, thought that the act of treachery was, under the circumstances of the case, both indispensable and justifiable. Besides the odium excited by his last proceeding, Omichund was detested in Calcutta on account of the well-grounded suspicion that he had contributed to lead the nabob to the capture and plunder of that place, and to the dismal tragedy of the black-hole. That such a scoundrel should be gratified in all his wishes, and be allowed to extort in so nefarious a manner the enormous sum of thirty lacs of rupees, seemed altogether mad and monstrous. Clive, to the end of his life, justified the trick. He said before the House of Commons—"I never made any secret of it; I think it warrantable in such a case, and would do it again a hundred times; I had no interested motive in doing it, and did it with a design of disappointing the expectations of a rapacious man." As soon as Mr. Watts received the two treaties at Moorshedabad he showed the red one to the grasping,

* Parl. Report.

† T. B. Macaulay, Edinburgh Review, No. CXLII., and Essays Critical, Historical, and Miscellaneous.

gasping Hindu, and then endeavoured to get him away from the nabob's court, lest he should brew some fresh mischief, or demand more gold to close his lips. Omichund said he wished to tarry a little longer at Moorshedabad, as the nabob had not yet paid him all the money he had promised him; but Watts at last succeeded in persuading him that Clive, who wanted his valuable services, would pay him with a liberality that would more than make up for any deficit or loss he might sustain by going to Calcutta; and then the Hindu took the road to that city in company with Mr. Scrafton. But on the road he gave fresh cause for uneasiness. At Cossimbuzar Mr. Scrafton missed him, and after a search found him at midnight closeted with the nabob's treasurer, endeavouring to obtain from him some more money. As the treasurer was not to be moved, Omichund continued his journey. During the night Mr. Scrafton fell asleep in his palanquin, and waking at daybreak he again missed his suspicious and slippery companion. Not knowing this time where to look for him, the Englishman halted on the high road till three o'clock in the afternoon, when Omichund reappeared with a troubled countenance. He said he had been to pay a visit at the camp of Plassey to his friend Roydullub, one of the conspirators, who had told him that no stipulations had been made in his (Omichund's) favour in the treaty with Meer Jaffier! Every man engaged in these life and death transactions needed nerves of iron. Scrafton had both nerve and wit: he stood unmoved the searching glances of the Hindu, and he ingeniously convinced him that Roydullub could not yet have seen the final treaty arranged between the select committee and Meer Jaffier,—in which treaty his name stood for the promised rupees. Thus convinced, and full of hope or confidence, the Hindu went the rest of the journey without giving any further trouble to his travelling companion. On the 8th of May Omichund arrived at Calcutta, where he was received by Colonel Clive and the other members of the committee with much apparent cordiality. But, in a nature like his, and engaged in such transactions, jealousy and suspicion could not be put to rest for any length of time. He sought out the Persian secretary of the council, and bribed him to inform him if any deceit to his detriment should appear in the treaty, when ratified by Meer Jaffier in the Persian language. In this quarter, however, his money and his trouble were thrown away, as neither the Persian scribe, nor any other doubtful dependent, was admitted into the secret. After the departure of Omichund from Moorshedabad disputes arose between Mr. Watts and Meer Jaffier as to the manner in which the nabob's treasure was to be divided; and when these difficulties were amicably adjusted, Suraj-u-Dowlah quarrelled again with Meer Jaffier, deprived him of the chief command of the army, and appointed to it Coja Haddee. Meer Jaffier shut himself up in his strong palace at Moorshedabad, and called upon his officers and retainers to defend him in case he should be attacked by the nabob. He had signed the last treaty, but Mr. Watts required the confirmation of his oath, and requested an audience of him. Jaffier declined the visit, saying that it would excite suspicion, and that he was closely watched. Upon this Watts threw himself into a covered palanquin, such as was used to carry native ladies of rank, and passed unchallenged into the palace and into the harem, where he was met by the khan and his son Meeran. In that sanctuary they were safe from intrusion, and they conferred at their leisure. Meer Jaffier said that through the recent alteration in the command all the troops he could confidently rely upon were 3000 horse; but that the nabob was so odious, and the disaffection so general, that many chiefs might be expected to desert him on the day of battle. At all events he desired that the English would immediately take the field and march upon Plassey and the capital, promising that, if the nabob remained in Moorshedabad and attempted to defend that city, he would himself rise within the walls and attack him in his palace; and that, in case of the nabob's risking a battle in the open plain at

Plassey or elsewhere, he would at the onset beat a great drum and hoist a white flag as signals, join the English, and charge the nabob's army with all his horse. He then swore to observe every article of the true treaty, placing the Koran on his own head, and his hand on the head of his son, whilst Mr. Watts held the papers before him. This over, Watts retired as he had come in the covered palanquin: and having dispatched Omar-beg, one of Meer Jaffier's officers, to Calcutta with a message to Clive, he—a man of remarkable nerve, like all the rest—determined to remain at Moorshedabad until the very last moment, in order to watch events and to avoid exciting the suspicions of the nabob, who would have understood by his flight the hostile intentions of the English.



Patna. From a View by Thomas Daniell.

No. 7.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CLIVE MARCHES UPON MOORSHEDABAD.

CLIVE, though well knowing that Meer Jaffier was a timid and irresolute man that might fail him at the moment of crisis, resolved to lose no more time, but to begin at once a short campaign, which must either lay a throne and the richest provinces of India at his feet, or ruin him and the company beyond all hope of recovery. Having made his preparations, and collected his troops at Chandernagore, he set out from that place on the 13th of June, leaving 100 sailors to garrison that fort, and taking every soldier from it. The Europeans, with the field-pieces, stores, and ammunition, proceeded in 200 boats, which were towed against the stream by the Indian rowers: the sepoys marched in sight of the boats along the high road made by the Mogul government, and continuing from Hooghly to Patna. Clive now dispatched a letter to Suraj-u-Dowlah, complaining "that he (the nabob) had used every subterfuge to evade the accomplishment of the treaty of February; that he had in four months restored only a fifth part of the effects he had plundered from the English; that he had scarcely made peace before he invited M. Bussy to come from the Deccan, and assist him in extirpating them once more out of his dominions; that the party of French troops with M. Law were at this very time maintained at his expense within a hundred miles of his capital; that he had, on groundless suspicions, insulted the English honour—at one time sending troops to examine their factory at Cossimbuzar, at another driving their vakeel [agent] with disgrace out of his presence; that he had promised a sum of gold rupees, then denied that promise, and then sent Omichund from the city under pretence that it was he who deceived the English commanders in their business. On the other hand, the English had borne all these injuries patiently, and had even taken the field to assist him when alarmed by the approach of the Patans; but at length, seeing no other remedy, their army was now marching to Moorshedabad, where they intended to refer their complaints to the decision of the principal officers of his government; namely, Meer Jaffier, Roydullub, the Seits, Meer Murdeen, and Moonloll; to which arbitration it was hoped that he would acquiesce, and so spare the effusion of blood." At this moment Omichund, who had not been enabled to discover anything of the trick intended against him, was following the English army, and rendering services to Clive in communicating with Monichund, Nuncomar, and other chiefs. At Moorshedabad Meer Jaffier continued shut up in his strong palace, which was furnished with artillery, and made more like a place of arms than a dwelling-house. Mr. Watts was still in the same city, but feeling that the moment for his hasty departure was arriving. On the 11th, Meer Jaffier sent him a message, advising him to escape immediately. The English soldiers and goods at Cossimbuzar had been sent off some days before, and Watts had everything ready for his own flight. Still, however, he lingered about the court of the nabob, being reluctant to quit his dangerous post until he received an express order from Clive. On the 13th he was assured by a fresh messenger from Meer Jaffier that there was no longer any safety for him in Moorshedabad, as the nabob was going to attack his palace with cannon on the next morning. Upon this warning Watts stole out of the city, and travelled in his palanquin to Cossimbuzar, where there remained Mr. Collet, Mr. Sykes, and a surgeon, who were to

make their escape with him. Watts ordered a banquet for the evening, and adopted other artifices, to make the people believe he intended staying in the factory; but, having collected the English gentlemen, he put himself under the guidance of a faithful Usbeg Tartar, struck across a wild and unfrequented part of the country, and after some strange adventures reached the head-quarters of Clive at Culnah at three o'clock in the afternoon of the next day, having met on the road a messenger bearing Clive's orders to join him.

Intelligence of the flight of Mr. Watts was conveyed to the nabob the morning after his departure, just as he was preparing to cannonade Meer Jaffier's palace. He now discovered strong reasons for believing what he had before tried to doubt, that there was a league between Jaffier and the English. Filled with dismay, he gave up all thoughts of cannonading his general, and endeavoured to detach him from his engagements with the English, and to win him back to his own service. Meer Jaffier received his overtures, but refused to quit his fortified residence to wait upon the nabob. Sinking his pride in his terror, Suraj-u-Dowlah hereupon condescended to wait upon the general in his own house, and an interview, with proper precautions on both sides, took place in Jaffier's palace. The nabob was profuse of promises, and at the end of the interview everything seemed changed again, for Meer Jaffier swore upon the Koran to be true to his master; and the nabob swore to permit him, when the present troubles were over, to retire with his family and treasures to another province. This was on the 15th, and Suraj-u-Dowlah, who, from his own practice and experience, might have been expected to make a more correct estimate of the value of such vows and promises, was so elated that he sent off a letter of defiance to Clive, whose manifesto he had not yet received. He reproached the English commander with the want of justice and good faith; he alluded to the flight of Mr. Watts as a proof of his treachery and evil intentions; he affirmed that his suspicion of the bad faith of the English had induced him to keep his army on foot at Plassey; and he called God and his Prophet to bear witness that Clive, and not he, had broken the treaty of February. At the same time he reinforced his army, sent Meer Jaffier to Plassey, as if confident in his truth, and wrote to M. Law to march back to Moorshedabad with all speed. In the mean while Clive kept steadily advancing: on the 16th he halted at Patlee, and sent Major Coote to take Cutwah, a mud fort about twelve miles higher up, and commanding the passage of the river Cossimbuzar, the governor of which had promised to surrender after some show of resistance. Coote on approaching the fort waved a white flag; but the governor had apparently changed his mind, for his answer to the signal was given by cannon-balls, and a warm fire was kept up from behind the mud walls for some time. As soon, however, as Coote put his Englishmen and his sepoys in order for an assault, the garrison set fire to the straw and matting which covered the walls to protect them from sun and rain, and fled out of the fort, wherein Coote found rice enough to supply an army of 10,000 men for a whole year. In the evening Clive came up with his main body and encamped in the plain; but the next day the rainy season set in with terrible violence, and he was obliged to seek shelter for his army in the houses and mud huts of the town of Cutwah, which stood near to the fort. Nearly every day since he had begun his march Clive had sent secret messengers to Meer Jaffier; but no answer from that chief reached him until the 17th, and the letter then received was far from being satisfactory. Jaffier confessed to him that he had been reconciled to the nabob, and had taken an oath to be true to him; adding, however, that all this signified nothing, and that he still expected the English to keep their engagements. It was not easy to trust a man who could swear with so much readiness on every side, and Clive determined not to cross the river of Cossimbuzar—the holiest branch of the Ganges—until he should obtain some further securities or assurances that Jaffier really intended to act with him. On the 20th—the anniversary of the

black-hole—the messenger who had been dispatched by Mr. Watts to Meer Jaffier returned to Cutwah, where he reported to Clive that he had gained access to that chief, but that while conversing with him and his son Meeran, some officers came into the apartment who seemed to be steadily devoted to the nabob, and that thereupon Meeran, changing his tone, had told him he would cut off his head as a spy, and the heads of all the English that dared to cross the river into the island. But on the evening after the arrival of this messenger at the English quarters another secret emissary appeared there, with two letters from Meer Jaffier, one addressed to Clive and the other to Omar-beg, who was in the English camp. In these letters Jaffier re-affirmed his resolutions, and stated that his position at Plassey would be either on the right or left wing of the nabob's army: that he was now in the camp and should be able to communicate more freely and frequently with the English. He also gave some account of the state of the army, but seemed to avoid entering into any particulars as to the course which Clive ought to pursue upon reaching Plassey.

The mind of the English commander was still disquieted by suspicions and misgivings. With the assistance of Jaffier's 3000 horse he made sure of victory, but without this accession of strength he despaired of it, as he was wholly destitute of cavalry. The greatness of the stake for which he was playing with so small an army, the heavy responsibility that lay upon him, rendered him irresolute and nervous, and he had recourse, for the first and last time in his life, to a council of war. Having, on the morning of the 21st, assembled his officers to the number of fifteen,* he proposed the following questions:—"Whether the army should immediately cross into the island of Cossimbuzar, and at all risks attack the nabob? or whether, availing themselves of the great quantity of rice which they had taken at Cutwah, they should maintain themselves there during the rainy season, and in the mean time invite the Mahrattas to enter the province and join them?"* Contrary to the established practice, Clive gave his opinion first—and it was, that they should remain where they were. Majors Kilpatrick and Grant with six other officers agreed with Clive; but Captain Coote differed with him, and his opposite opinion was supported by six other officers.† Coote's notion was—"that the common soldiers were at present confident of success; that a stop so near the enemy would naturally quell this ardour: that the arrival of the French troops with M. Law would add strength to the nabob's force, and vigour to his councils: that they would surround the English army and cut off its communication with Calcutta, when distresses not yet foreseen might ruin it as effectually as the loss of a battle. He therefore advised that they shou'd either advance and decide the contest immediately, or immediately return to Calcutta." But Clive's majority of nine had scarcely carried the question against Coote's seven, when Clive himself felt dissatisfied at the decision, and his mind began to resume its vigour and firmness. To collect his thoughts he retired alone to a grove of mango-trees a little beyond the town of Cutwah; he remained there for an hour in deep meditation; but then he returned to his quarters with the word "Forward" on his lips; and, without consulting or caring for the council of war, he gave his orders that the army should cross the river on the following morning. At the hour appointed—at sunrise—the troops were put in motion: they had all crossed the river by four in the afternoon, and after a rapid march they encamped, long after sunset, in a mango grove near Plassey, and within a mile of the enemy. Clive, kept awake by his anxious thoughts, heard during the whole night the drums, trumpets, and cymbals of the nabob's host, who had been warned of the approach of the English, and were making their barbaric music to dispel drowsiness. After crossing the river in the morning, Clive received an-

* Orme says *twenty*, but Sir John Malcolm gives the names of all the officers from a list found in Clive's papers, and there, the total number, including Clive, is sixteen.

* Orme.

† Sir John Malcolm's Life of Clive.

other letter from Meer Jaffier, conveying incorrect intelligence about the position which the nabob himself intended to occupy. It appears, however, that this incorrectness was not intentional, and that Suraj-u-Dowlah, who never had a consistent plan, altered his intentions. In replying to Meer Jaffier, Clive said, that, unless he co-operated with his cavalry, he would make peace with the nabob. Suraj-u-Dowlah, who was really in the camp at Plassey, was as sleepless as Clive: his army was immense, but he had no courage and no confidence in his chiefs, and it is even said that while sitting in his tent he expected to be assassinated. At last the day broke which was to decide the fate of Bengal.

The extensive ground occupied by the nabob's army had defences both natural and artificial; a deep winding river flowed round three of its sides, and the other side was in part traversed by a ditch: there were two tanks surrounded by high earthen embankments, and there were groves, thickets, and eminences in various directions. But, relying on their superiority in numbers, the native troops, instead of waiting to be attacked, marched out to attack the English. Soon after sunrise they poured through all their openings and advanced to the mango grove where Clive lay. They were 40,000 foot and 16,000 horse: they had fifty heavy cannon, each drawn by a long train of white oxen, and pushed on from behind by an elephant; and, besides this ordnance, there were some field-pieces under the direction of about forty Frenchmen. The cavalry was far superior in quality to any that the English had yet seen in the Carnatic or in Bengal; it was not composed of the unwarlike weakly materials found in the valley of the Ganges and the plains of Hindustan, but both men and horses were from the hardier clime of Northern India. To oppose this vast host Clive had but 3000 foot, and of this number only 1000 were British soldiers; but his sepoys were admirably trained and disciplined, were all commanded by British officers, and were enthusiastically attached to their general. All the artillery he had consisted of eight field-pieces, but these were well placed in the wood, and ably served by artillery-men and by sailors from Watson's fleet. Clive expected every moment to receive an encouraging message from Meer Jaffier, but none came. The Indians began the fight with their great guns. Clive ordered his people to sit down on the ground, and the loud cannonade of the enemy did them little mischief, the balls mostly striking the mango-trees over their heads. But when the Indians came a little nearer to the grove, the rapid fire of the English field-pieces did great execution on their crowded and confused masses. At eleven o'clock Clive resolved to keep up his cannonade, which seemed quite sufficient to deter the enemy from a near approach, all the rest of the day, and then, when night arrived, to penetrate into the nabob's camp, these night attacks having so often been proved the best method of ruining native armies. About noon there fell a heavy shower of rain, which damaged the ammunition of the incautious Indians, and thereby obliged them to slacken their fire; but, Clive's powder being well protected from the elements, his eight field-pieces in the grove kept up their fire with the greatest regularity. About the *hour* of noon one of his cannon-balls mortally wounded Meer Murdeen, one of the highest and best officers of the enemy; and the event greatly terrified the nabob, who was remaining in his tent at a safe distance, and who had hitherto been flattered by those who took a nearer view of the battle with the assurance that his victory was certain. But now Suraj-u-Dowlah could see nothing before him but defeat and treachery; and, sending for Meer Jaffier, he took his turban from his head and threw it on the ground, exclaiming, "Jaffier, that turban you must defend." Meer Jaffier bowed reverentially to the nabob, and to the symbol of him, the turban on the ground, and, crossing his hands on his heart, he protested he would do all that could be done for his prince. It is said that immediately after this interview Jaffier dispatched a messenger to Clive informing him of the mortal wound of the great officer, and of the nabob's fears, and advising him to make an attack on the camp three hours after midnight:

but it is added that his messenger was too much afraid of the cannon-balls to venture to the English position. It appears doubtful whether such messenger was ever sent by the faltering, calculating conspirator, who was evidently determined not to commit himself on the field, or to risk anything until he should see a certainty of Clive's success. But the increasing panic of the unmanly nabob soon made that success most certain. Roydullub, who was as deep in the conspiracy as Meer Jaffier, repaired to the craven, to magnify the danger and to advise him to retreat immediately to his capital. Suraj-u-Dowlah at once gave orders for commencing the retreat, and at about two o'clock in the afternoon the firing of his great guns ceased altogether, and the long teams of white oxen were put to the cumbrous carriages to drag them off. In a short time all that host, horse and foot, was seen retreating through the camp, and nothing remained stationary on that side except the small body of French adventurers who had ensconced themselves and their field-pieces behind the embankment of one of the tanks. To dislodge these Frenchmen, Major Kilpatrick detached himself, without orders, from the grove, with two companies and two field-pieces. When he was made aware of this unauthorised movement, Clive ran to Kilpatrick, reprimanded him, and sent him back to the grove to bring up the entire force. As soon as the English began to approach in numbers, the French, seeing that they were left without any support, hastily abandoned the tank, and retreated to the rear of some intrenchments in the interior of the camp.

While Clive was advancing, a great body of the nabob's cavalry appeared on his flank: these were the troops of Meer Jaffier, but they were not recognised as such by the English, for the promised white flag was not held out, nor was any other signal given or message sent. Clive, conceiving that they were manœuvring to fall upon his baggage and his rear—which doubtless they would have done if he had been checked and beaten—detached three platoons of the line and a field-piece to stop their march. Major Grant presently fired into the mass, and Jaffier, still making no sign, halted and fell back. Clive, in the mean time, had taken possession of the tank which the French had abandoned, had occupied an eminence 200 yards to the left of the tank, and was now maintaining from both these posts a warm cannonade. But the French kept their ground, some of the nabob's troops rallied, and some of his heavy guns were again loaded and pointed upon the English. Some bodies of cavalry too advanced several times as if to charge, but they were every time stopped and driven back by Clive's field-pieces. At last that great body of horse which had recently been on his flank began to move off the field without joining the rest of the nabob's army: and this convinced Clive that they were the troops of Meer Jaffier, and that that conspirator was now in reality doing something, in his timid way, to settle the affair. In a few minutes Clive advanced still farther and fell upon the Frenchmen, who, finding themselves again abandoned by the natives, fled from their position, and this time left their field-pieces behind them. There was no more fighting: the nabob's tens of thousands were flying towards Moorshedabad; the whole camp, with tents, baggage, artillery, and oxen, was left in the undisputed possession of the English, whose booty upon that spot alone was of immense value. Suraj-u-Dowlah, mounted on a swift dromedary, was the foremost in the flight: he was accompanied by some 2000 horsemen, and seems never to have stopped or looked behind him till he reached his capital. Clive stated his loss at twenty-two killed and fifty wounded, and these chiefly blacks, and the loss of the enemy at about 500 killed and wounded. All of his little army, British or sepoys, had behaved with the greatest steadiness and bravery, but praise was more particularly given to the 39th regiment, which still bears on its banners the name of "Plassey," and the motto, *Primus in Indis.**

The English pursued the fugitives for

* Orme.—Colonel Wilkes.—Sir John Malcolm, Life of Lord Clive. Clive's own account of the battle, in a letter to the secret committee, as given by Malcolm.—T. B. Macaulay.

about six miles, and then halted for the night at Daudpore, where Clive received a congratulatory letter from Meer Jaffier, who came and encamped in his neighbourhood that night. At midnight the fallen nabob arrived at his palace in Moorshedabad, and assembled all the officers that had escaped with him, to deliberate what next was to be done, or what means were most proper to save him from the wrath of his enemies. Some were of opinion that he ought to deliver himself up to the English and trust to the magnanimity of "The Daring in War;" and some proposed that he should dispense his treasures with a liberal hand to his officers and troops, collect all of the army that he could, place himself at the head of it, and try once more the fortune of war. He agreed, or at least seemed to agree, with these bolder advisers, whose advice in all probability sprung solely out of their desire of getting a part of his treasure; but, dismissing the council and retiring to the apartments of his women, his fears overcame him, and he made up his mind to fly from his capital. The circumstances of his flight were essentially Oriental, resembling scores of other stories told of dethroned Eastern princes, Indians, Persians, Saracens, or Turks. He took with him, grasped in his own hand, or hid under his own vest, a rich casket of jewels; and his chosen companions were his favourite concubine and his confidential eunuch: with no other attendants than these, and disguised in a mean dress, he descended in the darkness of night from a window of the palace, threw himself into a boat, and ascended the river towards Patna.

On the morning of the 24th of June, the day after the battle, Meer Jaffier waited upon Clive at Daudpore to claim the musnud. Conscious how strange his conduct at Plassey must have appeared to the English, he was not without his fears and trepidations, and, when Clive's troops drew out to receive him with military honours, he fancied they intended to kill him or make him their prisoner. He started back in a cold agony, but Clive, hastily advancing to receive him, and embracing him, hailed him as Nabob of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar. His fears were then sufficiently removed to allow of an hour's consultation with the English nabob-maker, who accepted the excuses he offered, and advised him to push forward to Moorshedabad with all his horse, in order to secure the palace and the treasury of Suraj-u-Dowlah. Jaffier and his cavalry reached the capital that evening, and the English made another advance of six miles. The treasury was secured; and some elephants loaded with gold, dresses, furniture, and women, which Suraj-u-Dowlah had sent away previously to his own flight, were overtaken and brought back to the palace. Hopes were also entertained of capturing the flying nabob himself, as troops of horse were sent in pursuit in various directions. On the 25th Clive arrived at Mandipore, and sent Messrs. Watts and Walsh, with an escort of sepoys, to pay a congratulatory visit to Meer Jaffier, and to look after the English share of the treasure. Watts, who was at home in Moorshedabad, where he knew all classes and conditions of men, was secretly assured that the Mohammedan and Hindu conspirators were resolved to withhold the treasure from their English allies; and that Roydulluh, Meeran the son of Jaffier, and Cuddum Hussein Khan, an officer of distinction, were in a new plot to assassinate Clive. Whether true or false, Mr. Watts thought fit to believe this information, and Clive thought it prudent to postpone his entry into Moorshedabad until the 29th; and when he entered he was surrounded by 200 English and 300 faithful sepoys. Moreover he took up his quarters in a strong palace, spacious enough to accommodate his 500 men. In a short time young Meeran waited upon him with all the flattery and adulation of the East: and Clive—we presume with a good escort—accompanied Meeran to pay a visit to his father. Meer Jaffier was found installed in the royal palace, in the splendid hall where Suraj-u-Dowlah had been wont to give audience. The musnud, or throne, was at the top of that hall, and Clive, perceiving that Jaffier kept at a distance from the regal seat, took him by the hand, led him up the hall, and seated him

upon the musnud. That ancient maker and unmaker of kings, the gaunt Earl of Warwick, never displayed more might, dignity, and decision. When Jaffier was thus put in his pride of place, Clive completed the Eastern ceremony by presenting to him, on a golden platter, a heap of gold rupees, and then all present prostrated themselves before Jaffier as their lawful sovereign. The next morning the new nabob paid a visit to the English commander, and entered upon the delicate subject of the division of the spoils. He protested that there was not money enough left in Suraj-u-Dowlah's treasury to pay what the English demanded, and what had been stipulated for in the treaty between them; but he assured Clive at the same time that he was most anxious to satisfy him, and that he would pay the full amount if time were allowed him. In order to come to some definitive arrangement, and to obtain security from the only men capable of giving it, Clive proposed that they should repair together to the residence of the seits, or great Hindu bankers, who had nearly all been concerned in the conspiracy against Suraj-u-Dowlah. Meer Jaffier consented, and they went immediately to the seits, Clive being followed by Omichund, who fancied that he was higher than ever in the Englishman's favour, and that the moment was now at hand when he should receive some of his lacs of rupees. But, on arriving at the seits, Omichund was not invited to a seat on the carpet with the other Hindu capitalists, and, somewhat disconcerted and dismayed by this slight, he sat himself down among his servants near the outer part of the hall. The white or real treaty, containing all the stipulations and the sums and proportions agreed upon, was now produced: and Clive, turning to Mr. Scrafton, who was in attendance with Mr. Watts, said, "It is now time to undeceive Omichund." Scrafton, who spoke the language of the country well, went up to the Hindu, who rose at his approach, and said—"Omichund, the red paper is a trick; you are to have nothing!" The old man staggered as if struck by a thunderbolt, and, fainting, would have fallen to the earth if his attendants had not caught him in their arms. He was conveyed to his palanquin and carried to his house in the city, where he lay for several hours insensible and speechless. His intellect, once so keen, never made more than a partial return: Clive recommended, what was a common cure for grief and sickness among the Hindus, a pilgrimage to some famed pagoda or temple; the old man went to one of the most celebrated of all these shrines, but he returned uncured; he fell into a state of idiocy, and died about a year and a half after receiving the mortal shock. His deathlike swoon and departure from the hall of the seits occasioned no emotion there; and the contracting parties to the white treaty calmly settled their money affairs. The treaty, as written in Persian and English, was read, and, after much conversation, it was settled, that one half of the sum promised the English should be paid immediately in coin, plate, and jewels taken out of the treasury; and that the other half should be discharged in three years by equal annual instalments; that Roydullub should receive the five per cent. which had been promised to Omichund, &c.

On the 2nd of July, two days after this conference, Meer Jaffier received the glad tidings that Suraj-u-Dowlah had been taken at Rajahmahal, through the information of a poor fakeer or dervish, who had recognised him in his disguise, having had good reason to remember the person of the tyrant, inasmuch as he had been deprived of his ears about thirteen months before by order of this nabob. This earless wight led a brother of Meer Jaffier, who was residing at Rajahmahal, to the fugitive's hiding-place, and Suraj-u-Dowlah was seized and hastily conveyed by a strong guard back to Moorshedabad. At the hour of midnight he was brought like a felon into the presence of Meer Jaffier, in the palace which had so recently been his own. He behaved in the most abject manner, crawling in the dust at the new nabob's feet, weeping and praying for mercy. It is said that Meer Jaffier, moved both by contempt and pity, intended to spare his life, but that Meeran, his son, as vile and ferocious a scoundrel as the fallen nabob, insisted that he ought to be put to death

to render the musnud and his succession to it the more secure. The victim was carried off by the soldiers to a distant chamber, the vilest in the palace, and there secured with a guard at the door. Before the day dawned Meeran sent a trusty servant and assassin to the chamber with an order to the guard to make an end of the prisoner. As the door flew open Suraj-u-Dowlah saw the intention, and fell into an agony of fear and horror. When he could speak he implored for a short respite to make his ablutions like a true Mussulman, and say his prayers, in order that his soul might not perish with his body. There chanced to be a pot of water close at hand, and the guards took it and emptied it on his head, and while the water was trickling to the earth Meeran's servant plunged a dagger into his body. The soldiers finished the butchery with their swords, and in the course of the following day the mangled remains of Suraj-u-Dowlah were exposed on an elephant in the streets of Moorshedabad, and then deposited in the tomb of his predecessor, Aliverdy Khan. His stormy career had been very short, for he was only twenty years old when it ended. Meeran, his murderer, was still younger, being only in his seventeenth or eighteenth year.

M. Law, on getting Suraj-u-Dowlah's last summons, had commenced his march back to Moorshedabad, but, upon receiving intelligence of the battle of Plassey, he stopped short when within twenty miles of the place where the fugitive nabob was taken. If the Frenchman had continued his march for a single day he might have met and saved the nabob. Law soon got the news of the capture and death of the wretched man, upon which he retreated with all speed into Bahar, intending to offer his services to Ramnarrain, the vice-nabob of the province, and a Hindu who was supposed to have been greatly attached to Suraj-u-Dowlah. This movement excited alarm in the new government at Moorshedabad, and Clive readily agreed to send troops in pursuit of the dangerous Frenchman; Meer Jaffier being afraid to trust his own army. Coote was appointed to the command of this flying column, which consisted of 230 Europeans, 300 sepoys, 50 Lascars, and 2 field-pieces. The baggage, stores, carriages, ammunition, and provisions, were to be conveyed up the river in boats; but there was so much difficulty and delay, that the column could not begin its march till the 6th of July, when Law had got half-way to Patna. Coote encountered many difficulties: through want of a sufficient number of boatmen he was often obliged to wait for the boats; it was the 10th of July ere he reached Rajahmahal, and the boats did not arrive till the 11th. Meer Jaffier's brother, who commanded in that district, would afford the English no assistance. Coote was detained here three days, and it was the 18th before he reached Boglipore, a place about 105 miles from Moorshedabad. Continuing to advance, though with little hope of overtaking Law, who was reported to be beyond Patna, Coote on the 21st reached Monghir, expecting to be received as a friend; but, seeing the garrison standing by their guns with lighted matches, he made a circuit and avoided the place. On the 23rd he arrived at Burhai, and, landing his field-pieces and ammunition, he marched the same evening six miles farther. On the following day, the English soldiers, worn out by heat and fatigue, were almost in a state of open mutiny. Coote ordered them all into the boats, and with the sepoys alone pushed on to the town of Bahar. On the 25th, while the English were still following in the slow boats, which were towed against the stream by natives pressed into that service, Coote and the sepoys entered Futwah, which was only seven miles from Patna. Here he received letters and a deputation from Ramnarrain, who endeavoured to excuse himself for having permitted M. Law to escape through his territories. He declared that he had acknowledged and proclaimed Meer Jaffier as rightful nabob of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar; and, as a matter of course, he professed the greatest friendship for the English. Yet the deputation charged with these compliments, and congratulations were ordered to ascertain Coote's strength and situation, with the view of surprising and destroying him. On the

very next day the sepoys by land and the English in the boats arrived at Patna, and quartered themselves in the company's factory, a spacious building just outside the western wall of the city. Coote would have immediately waited upon Ramnarrain, but he received a message from that chief begging him to take rest and defer his visit till the morrow. In the evening two or three of the English who were leading their cattle to the water-side were, without any provocation, assaulted by some peons belonging to the garrison. Coote complained of these outrages, but Ramnarrain gave him no satisfaction; and requested him not to pay his visit on the morrow, lest quarrels should arise between his people and the English. Moreover, one of Coote's officers, who was supposed not to understand the language, overheard two native chiefs discussing a project for massacring the English detachment. The next day Coote found an opportunity of conferring with some of the relations of Meer Jaffier, who assured him that Ramnarrain was seeking to compass his destruction, and to establish himself as an independent power in Bahar; that he expected assistance from the neighbouring Nabob of Oude; that he had sent M. Law into Oude, with recommendations to that court, to wait until the new confederacy should be ready. This information determined Coote to press forward to the frontier of Oude. Every obstacle was thrown in his way by Ramnarrain, who pretended all the time to be anxious to promote the expedition; and a large body of troops who hovered on the line of Coote's march wore so dubious an aspect that it was difficult to know whether they were friends or foes. Coote, however, on the 1st of August, reached a small town situated at the confluence of the Sona and Ganges. Three days were spent in ferrying the troops, bullocks, and baggage across the broad river; and on the 5th the detachment was assembled at Chuprah, where Coote was informed that Law had reached Benares, more than 140 miles off. Further pursuit was utterly hopeless; nor was it considered prudent to cross the frontier of the powerful ruler of Oude with so small a force, exhausted by fatigue and deprived of many of their materials of war by the sinking of some of the boats. Coote therefore rested at Chuprah, where, on the 12th of August, he received a letter from Clive, ordering him to return, and, if possible, to deprive Ramnarrain of the government of Bahar on his way back. The rapid stream of the Ganges, which had so impeded the boats on their way up, proportionately favoured their descent; and, embarking his troops, Coote glided down to Patna in one short day. There he would have assaulted Ramnarrain in the citadel, but this bold measure was opposed by Meer Jaffier's brother; and in a few days Meer Jaffier himself changed his mind, began to suspect his own relations of aiming at a separate sovereignty in Bahar, and instructed or implored Coote to treat Ramnarrain with kindness and consideration, and enter into arrangements with him. A conference was, therefore, held in Patna, and Ramnarrain swore, in the Hindu fashion, to be true to Meer Jaffier. Other solemn vows were made by other parties, every one of them intending to break their oaths as soon as they should find a fitting opportunity. On the 7th of September, Coote, leaving all quiet at Patna, re-embarked his detachment on the Ganges, and in seven days reached Moorshedabad.

In the mean time—on the 6th of July—Clive and the English committee had obtained payment, in coined silver, of 7,271,666 rupees, amounting in English money to 800,000*l.*; in addition to which Clive had taken or accepted from Meer Jaffier, as his own private reward, about 200,000*l.* sterling, or, according to his own statement, about 160,000*l.** The money filled 700 chests, embarked in 100 boats, which proceeded under the care of soldiers to Nudea, whence they were escorted to Fort William by all the boats of the English squadron, with banners flying and music sounding—a scene of triumph and joy, and a remarkable contrast to the scene of the preceding year, when Suraj-u-Dowlah had ascended the

* One of the first uses Clive made of his wealth was to bestow an annuity of 300*l.* on his old commander Laurence, who had grown old in the service without growing rich.

same stream triumphant from the conquest and plunder of Calcutta. Between the 9th and 30th of August the company received, in gold, jewels, and cash, 3,255,095 rupees. The other advantages which the new nabob had promised the English were—a right to establish a mint of their own at Calcutta; the entire expulsion of the French for ever, and the delivery to the company of their factories and effects; the entire property of all lands within the Mahratta ditch at Calcutta to be vested in the company; also 600 yards all round without the said ditch; the cession of all the land in the neighbourhood of Calcutta that lay between the river, the lake, and Calpee, the company paying the usual rent to the nabob; and full freedom of trade throughout the three provinces, except that the old prohibition against their trading in salt, betel, and some other commodities, was to remain in force.—As the trade in salt was very profitable, some of the English at Calcutta endeavoured to obtain at least a part of it; and before Meer Jaffier had been many weeks on the musnud, he complained that the treaty had been infringed in this particular.

The company's mint at Calcutta began to coin rupees by the 19th of August. Three days before this, Admiral Watson, who had so materially contributed to the success of the war, died of a jungle fever. Clive remained with the committee at Moorshedabad to press the nabob for more money; the great payment already made not amounting to the promised half, and the time fixed for the first instalment of the second half being near at hand. Meer Jaffier and his son had imagined that the private gratifications given to the English commander would render him less active and severe as to the public account, but Clive let them know that they must pay punctually all that they had agreed to pay, and he also insisted in the tone of a master, that they must observe the treaty in every other respect, and by no means deprive the chiefs who had been parties to it of any of their places, emoluments, or promised rewards. The new nabob was already plotting against the said chiefs and the Hindu bankers, being eager to destroy and plunder those who had helped to raise him. Almost immediately after Coote's return from Patna, Clive repaired to Calcutta, leaving Messrs. Watts, Scratton, and Maningham to transact the company's affairs at Moorshedabad. Coote's detachment was quartered at Cossimbuzar; and the rest of the troops who had fought at Plassey, and conquered a country more extensive and more populous than the whole of Great Britain, were sent down the river and quartered at Chandernagore, a place then considered more healthy than Calcutta. Clive was received with wonderful acclamations, and he witnessed the effects of his achievements in the restoration of commerce, confidence, and prosperity.

For some time, while Clive was changing nabobs and rooting out the French in Bengal, his countrymen on the Coromandel coast endeavoured to preserve a truce with the French at Pondicherry. The presidency of Madras, which had dispatched most of the troops and ships to co-operate on the Hooghly, instructed Captain Calliaud, who remained with Mohammed Ali in Trichinopoly, not to engage in any warlike operations. But when they received intelligence of some of the successes obtained in Bengal, and perceived that the French in the Carnatic were receiving no reinforcement, they resolved to make an attempt upon Madura, and to try all the means in their power to subject the whole country to their ally, who was now greatly embarrassed by the rebellion of two of his younger brothers. Captain Calliaud was ordered to march to Madura; and he took the road accordingly, though much distressed by want of money. Reaching Madura, Calliaud made an unsuccessful attempt on the place, and before he could repeat the assault he was recalled to Trichinopoly by information that the French were showing themselves in that neighbourhood: this was on the 21st of May (1757). He instantly made up his mind to leave tents, baggage, and artillery behind him, and to fly to the relief of Trichinopoly, which was garrisoned by 150 European infantry, 15 artillerymen, 700 sepoys, 600 men furnished by a Hindu chief of Tanjore, and about 400 worthless

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fellows belonging to Mohammed Ali. According to Orme, these auxiliaries were fit for nothing but night-watches, and not even fit for that without being watched themselves. There were no fewer than 500 French prisoners within the walls, who had found means to maintain a correspondence with their countrymen outside, and who were prepared to rise upon the garrison. The besieging army, which had commenced operations several days before Captain Calliaud received the letter at Madura, consisted of 1000 Europeans, infantry and artillery, 150 European cavalry, and 3000 sepoys, supported by several field-pieces, all under the command of M. d'Auteuil. Pondicherry had been left with scarcely any garrison, and vast exertions and sacrifices had been made in the hope that Trichinopoly might be taken while Calliaud was away at Madura. D'Auteuil threw shot and shell into the town during four successive days, and then summoned it in form. The English officer in command replied that he would defend the place to the last extremity. It was expected that d'Auteuil would attempt a storm, but he remained quiet behind his batteries; and, a day or two after, Calliaud, with admirable rapidity and skill, reached the vicinity, completely deceived the French as to the path he intended to take, turned the long lines drawn out to intercept him without receiving a shot, got between the besiegers and the besieged, and finally entered Trichinopoly in triumph; but so exhausted by the continual fatigues he had undergone that he could no longer walk or stand without support. His arrival was announced to the French by a discharge of twenty-one cannon. D'Auteuil raised the siege the same day and retreated to Seringham, whence he soon withdrew to Pondicherry, mortified and humiliated in no common degree. After his retreat the war again languished in the Carnatic until the French, by an unexpected movement, took the important English factory of Vizagapatam.

While the presidency of Madras were demanding money from Mohammed Ali by letters and messengers, Bajee Row's Mahrattas burst into the country to exact, at the sword's point, tribute or black mail from the same poor potentate. The nabob bought them off for the present with 200,000 rupees; but this made him so much the less able to pay his debts to the English, whose treasury was almost empty. But worse followed; for Mohammed Ali, besides the 200,000 rupees in hand, had promised the Mahrattas 250,000 more *in futuro;* and he pretended that the English should furnish this sum out of the rents of the lands he had assigned to them for their services in establishing his authority. This demand was at first met by the presidency with anger, and a resolution to resist it. Morari Row, and the chiefs of some of the other Mahratta tribes, offered to assist the English; but their services would have cost as much as the sum in dispute, and their return into the country would have been a fresh scourge, and a new cause of impoverishment. The English, says Orme, "had no alternative but to pay or fight." For fighting they had not men enough, and for paying they had not money enough; but the credit of the company was known even in the camps of the wild Mahrattas, and when the English consented to pay, they agreed to take part of the amount in coin and part in bills.

In the month of September a squadron of twelve ships appeared off Fort St. David. The English authorities in the fort sent off a gentleman to congratulate the admiral on his safe arrival, and to deliver a letter containing some necessary and important information. When the messenger got near to the ships he discovered that they were not English, but French—it was too late to retreat—he concealed the letter, went on board, and was made prisoner. This French fleet was commanded by M. Bouvet, who enjoyed the reputation of being one of the best naval officers of France; and it had on board 20 pieces of battering cannon, some mortars, and a great number of bombs and balls, the regiment of Lorraine, nearly 1000 strong, 50 artillerymen, and 60 volunteers; the troops being under the command of the Marquis de Soupires. Four of the fleet were 60-gun ships, two carried 50 guns each, three others varied from 36 to 22 guns each, and there were two sloops

of war of 16 guns each, and a bomb-ketch. The English from Fort St. David saw these ships repair to Pondicherry and there land the troops; this was on the 9th of September; and a day or two after the whole fleet disappeared, leaving the English much perplexed as to its next destination and object. The fact was, the mishap of the messenger had had the most happy and unexpected consequences; for, whilst the marquis was deciding how to attack Fort St. David by sea and land, Bouvet discovered the letter which the messenger had concealed, and this epistle upset the whole scheme, for the council of Fort St. David mentioned in it that Admiral Watson, with his fleet from the Hooghly, was expected on the coast by the middle of September. And, as Bouvet apprehended that the junction of Watson with some English ships already on the coast would form a force superior to his own, he determined to fly while there was yet time; and in so great a hurry was he, that he would not even wait to land the heavy artillery and heavy ammunition which he had brought, for the landing must have occupied some time, and then the taking in of ballast would have occupied more. Crowding all his canvass he bore away for the Mauritius or Bourbon—flying from Watson, who had been nearly a month in his winding-sheet, and whose fleet, under the command of Rear-admiral Pococke, was still in the Hooghly. On the very day on which Bouvet took his departure, Captain Calliaud took Madura by making a fresh expedition from Trichinopoly, and by carrying a military chest, well filled, with him. One hundred and seventy thousand rupees was the price paid to the native chiefs and garrison for the surrender of this important place, the possession of which was of the highest importance to the English interests in Coromandel. Calliaud moreover succeeded in detaching many of the petty chiefs from the French, and in inducing turbulent tribes in the woods and hills to recognise the authority of Mohammed Ali. On the other side, however, the French, reinforced as they had been, were not inactive, or without triumphs and successes. Their dread of the arrival of Watson's fleet deterred them from attacking Fort St. David; and, as the Marquis de Soupires's orders forbade his engaging in any distant expedition, they could not try their fortunes again at Trichinopoly: they therefore confined their operations to the country between Pondicherry and the Paliar, where they took Chitteput, and two or three other inferior forts garrisoned by natives. Little else occurred during the remainder of the year, except a quarrel between the mother and brother of Mohammed Ali and the commandant of the English garrison at Arcot, who suspected that those near relations of the nabob were conspiring against him and the English. The commandant, after exercising some very arbitrary authority and giving mortal offence to the nabob's brother, was recalled by the presidency, and succeeded by a more prudent officer.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ARRIVAL OF A FRENCH FLEET.

As soon as war had been declared in Europe the government of Louis XV. had commenced preparations for a formidable expedition to the east; and the arrival of a great armament was now daily expected at Pondicherry. It was not, however, until the 28th of April, 1758, that a squadron of twelve ships reached that coast. These ships were commanded by Count d'Aché, and they had on board a regiment of infantry nearly 1100 strong, a corps of artillerymen, and a number of officers of distinction, all under the command of Count Lally, a veteran officer of Irish extraction, who had been all his life in the service of France, and who had fought against the English at Fontenoy. So high did Lally stand at this time, that he had been appointed governor-general, with the most extraordinary powers, over all the French possessions and establishments in India. The court of Versailles confidently anticipated that this new force being added to the troops under the Marquis de Soupires would be sufficient to clear the whole Coromandel coast of the English, and restore the supremacy of the French in the Carnatic. In compliance with the orders and instructions laid down for him, Lally was to commence operations by the reduction of Fort St. David. He dropped into Pondicherry with two of the ships, and d'Aché repaired at once to Fort St. David, where two English frigates, the only ships on the station, were run ashore and wrecked to prevent their being captured. The French ships anchored two miles to the southward, off Cuddalore, and waited there till troops from Pondicherry should invest the fort by land. But on the very next day Admiral Pococke, who some time before had brought Watson's squadron round to Ceylon, stood into the road and brought M. d'Aché to action. The English squadron was inferior in number; some of the ships were foul and damaged, and scarcely fit for service; some of the captains misunderstood the various signals made by the admiral; and in one or two instances the signals could not be obeyed through the unmanageableness of the ships. Nevertheless Pococke inflicted a severe blow on the French, the end of the drawn battle being the loss of 500 in killed and wounded on their side; while the English counted only twenty-nine killed and eighty-nine wounded. One of d'Aché's ships, the 'Bienaimé,' was stranded after the battle in consequence of damage done by English shot to her cables. Pococke's ships, however, had suffered greatly in their spars and rigging, and, in the various manœuvres which followed the battle, they drifted to leeward, and the French were enabled to come to anchor in the night in the road of Alamparva. Before the seafight began, some of the French troops from Pondicherry, hurried on by the impetuous Lally, without baggage, and even provisions, got to the rear of Fort St. David and drove in some English outposts. On the following day, the 30th of April, the Marquis de Soupires joined them with more troops, some heavy cannon found in Pondicherry, and a convoy of provisions. On the 1st of May, Lally, escorted by some French cavalry, arrived in person, and detached Count d'Estaing to take up a position near Cuddalore, which was no stronger now than when attacked twelve years before by M. Dupleix. It was garrisoned by four companies of sepoys and a few artillerymen, and, to add to the precariousness of its situation, it contained within its walls 150 French prisoners. In the evening this very weak garrison was reinforced from Fort St. David by thirty

Europeans and a few Lascars. But Cuddalore was not defensible, and could not have been held for any length of time even by a much stronger garrison; and, after a conference, Major Polier, the commandant of Fort St. David, agreed to evacuate it in four days, the troops being allowed to retire with the honours of war, with their arms and ammunition, to Fort St. David, and the French prisoners to be sent to another part of the coast and there to remain neutral.

M. Lally, who knew nothing of India or of the strange and complex nature of Indian society, and who was too hot-headed and presumptuous to be guided by those who had more knowledge, created the greatest disgust by forcibly employing different castes of the natives in labours to which they had never been accustomed, and which they considered derogatory to their condition and dishonourable to the castes to which they belonged. The more rigour he exercised the greater became the difficulty of getting any work done. The sepoys and all others who did not belong to the very lowest castes would neither dig in the trenches nor drive the trains, and when Lally threatened or punished them they deserted. Thus no ground was broken, and the heavy artillery and stores, though they had only a few miles to traverse, were brought up very slowly. But M. d'Aché contrived to lend assistance by water; he landed troops and cannon at the mouth of the river Panaur, about a mile to the north of the fort, and on the 15th Lally opened a fire upon the garrison from an unfinished battery and from a great distance. It was not by means like these that Fort St. David, now regularly fortified on all sides and defended by a garrison of 619 Europeans,* 1600 natives, sepoys, lascars, and Topasses, could be reduced. But on the 16th Lally opened another battery from the ramparts of Cuddalore, and brought two or three guns to bear from points nearer at hand; and on that night a general assault was made upon the English outworks, some of which were carried. On the 17th Lally began to break ground, and, forcing his people to labour during the scorching heat of the day as well as during the night, he had a great trench finished by the night of the 19th. On the 20th he made another trench and repaired a bridge which crossed a canal. During five days he erected several other batteries, and girded the fort with more trenches. Meanwhile, through a defective discipline and some other faults, imputable to the officers in command, great desertions had taken place among the natives from the garrison. A great absurdity was also committed in keeping up a continual fire from the fort, wasting gunpowder and shot, ruining many of the gun-carriages, shaking the walls, and doing very little mischief to the French. On the 30th the French had advanced their trenches to within 200 yards of the glacis, and opened three more batteries. Just as their fire became most terrible, the English found that they had consumed nearly all their gunpowder, and that the French bombs, by injuring the reservoirs, had left them scarcely any water to drink. As their only hope, they looked seaward for Admiral Pococke's squadron. Baffled by contrary winds and currents, and then by dead calms, it was the 28th of May before Pococke could reach the road, and then he saw d'Aché's whole squadron lying at anchor at Pondicherry. M. d'Aché, who, besides the wounded in the late action, had a great many sick on board, was of opinion that his ships should be anchored near to each other, and close in shore, so as to have the support of the land-batteries; but Lally, hurrying round from Fort St. David, insisted that the squadron ought to stand out and fight the English in the open sea. Taking therefore on board 400 Europeans and about as many sepoys and lascars, d'Aché weighed anchor on the 31st; but, instead of bearing down upon Pococke, who could not possibly work up to him, he kept cautiously to the windward, with the evident determination of avoiding a combat. But Pococke could no more reach Fort St. David than he could reach d'Aché; the 'Cumberland,' one of the worst of his bad ships, kept falling away

* Of this number 83 were sick, 286 were effective, and 250 were seamen, the crews of the two frigates which had run ashore on the appearance of the French squadron.

to leeward, and in looking after her his whole force drifted down to Alamparva, where, on the 5th of June, he was told that Fort St. David had capitulated. Major Polier, who had acted so imprudently that his ammunition was all expended when most needed, had indeed capitulated on the 2nd. In the evening a company of French grenadiers were admitted within the fort, and the garrison marched with drums and colours to the foot of the glacis and surrendered themselves to the French line drawn up to receive them. They were, with all convenient speed, conducted to Pondicherry, where it was stipulated they should remain until an equal number of French prisoners were delivered there, when the English were to be sent to Madras, or Devi-Cottah, at the option of M. Lally, who rejected the proposal that Fort St. David should not be demolished during the war, and, in consequence of instructions from France, immediately ordered all the fortifications to be razed to the ground.* Lally next determined to obtain possession of Devi-Cottah, and he immediately detached M. d'Estaing in that direction with a considerable force, which was however reduced on the march by the frequent desertion of the sepoys.

The garrison of Devi-Cottah, which consisted of only thirty English and 600 sepoys, abandoned the place at his approach, and marched away for Trichinopoly. After the capture of Devi-Cottah, Lally marched his army from Fort St. David back to Pondicherry, entered that city, where pompous preparations had been ordered, in a triumphant procession, and celebrated a *Te Deum* for his successes. But he had scarcely done praising the Lord ere he began quarrelling with the gentlemen of the council, on account of the emptiness of the treasury, which seriously impeded his future operations. He thus early prepared a strife and a hatred which in the end brought him to a lamentable death; and he accused powerful and resentful men of having appropriated the public money to their own use. If he could have found rupees he would have proceeded immediately against Madras, for Polier's wretched defence of Fort St. David had given him a mean opinion of the military prowess of the English in India, and led him to anticipate an easy victory. In rummaging the exhausted treasury of Pondicherry he discovered a bond for 5,600,000 rupees, which had been given by the Rajah of Tanjore to Chunda Saheb, and by Chunda Saheb to the French, in satisfaction for some of the various claims which they had upon him. Lally determined to enforce payment of this bond, and taking the field he advanced towards Tanjore, with one in his camp that had pretensions to the sovereignty of the country.* The march was long, and the disposition of the country people everywhere unfavourable, for the treatment which Lally had given the natives at the siege of Fort St. David had revolted their prejudices. No bullock-men or market-people would follow him except by compulsion, and every act of compulsion tended to spread and increase the ill-will against him. His want of money and almost total want of provisions, even at the beginning of the march, induced him to rob and plunder; and the French soldiery, when once they got accustomed to these operations, considered everything as their own that they could seize or extort at the point of the sword. A regiment of hussars was con-

* Orme.

* "The French," says Orme, "had found in Fort St. David a prisoner of greater consequence than they expected; his name was Gatica: he was uncle to the deposed king of Tanjore, whose pretensions the English asserted in 1749, when they entered the country and took Devi-Cottah. The king then and now reigning, when he ceded this place to them in propriety, stipulated, by a secret article, that they should prevent this pretender from giving any molestation in future; to insure which it was necessary to secure his person; but he withdrew himself out of their reach; however, being in possession of his uncle, who was the leading man of the party, and had entirely managed his nephew, they detained him a prisoner, but under an easy confinement, within the fort, where he remained until fated by the fall of the place to be employed by the French with the same views as nine years before by the English: and Gatica was now produced at Pondicherry with much ostentation and ceremony, in order to excite the apprehensions of the king, that the pretender himself would appear and accompany the French army, whom nevertheless they did not proclaim."

stantly employed in cattle-lifting, and the unfortunate natives saw their cows and their oxen driven into the French camp, where no price was ever paid, or even promised. The effect of this, however, was slight and trivial, compared to the excitement produced by the outrages the French offered to the women and to the Brahmins. In seven days Lally reached Carical, which he reinforced, as the French there were apprehensive of an attack by Pococke's squadron. He then proceeded to what had been recently the rich and thriving town of Nagore, in the hope of getting a great booty and contribution in money. But the native merchants, warned in time, had carried off their money and jewels, and they offered little for the redemption of their houses. The French hussars were, therefore, let loose on the defenceless town, with the understanding and regular bargain that Lally was to have a large share of the spoils. The Hiberno-Frenchman then applied, in a peremptory manner, to the Dutch at Negapatam, to supply his wants in money, ammunition, and provisions; and the Dutch, awed by his power, sent him 20,000 pounds of gunpowder, declaring that money they had none, but that as to provisions the French commissaries might purchase them in their territory. Acting under the same fears, the Danes, who had a small settlement on the coast, sent him 10,000 pounds of gunpowder and six small field-pieces. On the line of march stood the pagoda of Kivalore, which Lally believed to contain great riches. Here he halted, ransacked the place and the houses of the Brahmins, dragged the tanks and got possession of a number of idols; but to his bitter disappointment these figures instead of being of gold were of brass, and as no treasures could be found above ground, or under ground, or in the water, he incurred a horrible odium without any profit. On the following day he reached another pagoda from which the priests had all fled; but perceiving in the evening that some of the Brahmins had come back, and were looking about them and asking questions, he chose to consider them as spies, and he put six of them to death by blowing them off from the mouths of his field-pieces. He then went on to Trivatore, where he remained till the 12th of July, employing his well-practised hussars in scouring the neighbouring country and seizing the cattle, part of which were consumed in his camp and part sent down to the towns on the sea-coast to be sold for the benefit of the army. On the 18th, Lally halted near to the walls of the city of Tanjore, and sent in one of his captains and a Jesuit, called Father Esteban, to demand the full amount of the bond. The rajah offered 300,000 rupees. Lally then said that he would consent to take 1,000,000 in money, if the rajah would add to it 600 bullocks and 10,000 pounds of gunpowder. The rajah would not comply with these terms; and therefore Lally began to throw shot and shell at the temples and pagodas, and such other buildings in the town as towered above the walls. He also continued the work of cattle-lifting in the open country, sending droves upon droves down to Carical and Pondicherry. The rajah, in a few days, made overtures for a peaceful accommodation, and sent 50,000 rupees to the French general to prove the sincerity of his intentions. A treaty was commenced, in which the Hindu prince endeavoured to dupe the French, and they him. In the mean time English assistance had been called for, and 600 sepoys, sent by Major Calliaud from Trichinopoly, were on their march to Tanjore. After an infinitude of manœuvres on both sides, Lally broke off the negotiation, denounced the most implacable vengeance against the city and the whole kingdom, swore he would send the rajah and his family to the Mauritius as slaves; and he erected two batteries, with which, on the 2nd of August, he began to ply the walls of Tanjore, where they were weakest. After five days' firing, a breach was made; but by this time Lally had burned nearly all his gunpowder, and notwithstanding all the cattle-lifting he had not provisions for more than two days. The country people, driven to desperation by the losses and insults they had sustained, were continually cutting off stragglers and small detachments, and masses of Tanjore cavalry, that gave no quarter, had thrown themselves between Lally

and the places from which alone he could expect supplies. On the 8th of August Lally's uneasiness was increased by intelligence that another engagement had taken place between the French and English squadrons, and that the English ships were menacing Carical, where the French squadron had not been heard of since the engagement. Quite crest-fallen, he summoned a council of war: ten of his officers recommended an immediate retreat, and only two an immediate assault and storm. On the same day the sick and wounded were sent away under the escort of 150 Europeans, and preparations were made for a general decampment on the morrow. In the course of the night the English sepoys from Trichinopoly entered the town. Early the next morning the sepoys joined the Tanjorians in a sortie and general attack on the French camp, while bodies of Tanjore horse and swarms of country people, and wild coolies from the hills, made some attempts on the French rear. Lally had several hair-breadth escapes; at one moment he was nearly blown into the air by the explosion of a tumbril of gunpowder, at another he was nearly cut down by a scimitar, and he was actually knocked down and trampled upon by some of the rajah's cavalry. Three of his cannon were taken, and a considerable number of his men killed in the first surprise. But when the French recovered their presence of mind, and formed in good compact order, they were too much for the Tanjorians; and the English sepoys, left without proper support, were compelled to abandon the three guns they had taken, and to retreat into the town with no other prizes than one elephant and two camels. The French now spiked their heavy guns, threw the shot into wells, and destroyed a considerable part of their baggage: and then, in the darkness of night, they marched away in all haste from the walls of Tanjore, pestered in their retreat by the peasantry and by the Tanjore horse, and half famished and half crazed with thirst. The retreat was most disastrous till they got to Trivatore; and, if the native cavalry had not left off pursuing when their pursuit ought to have been the hottest, their sufferings and losses must have been greatly increased. On his road between Trivatore and Carical, Lally was informed that the French squadron had returned to its anchorage at Pondicherry, but that M. d'Aché was determined to sail for the Mauritius or Bourbon without seeking any further action with Pococke. Lally in a fury sent the Count d'Estaing to remonstrate, to persuade, to threaten, to do everything in his power to make the French admiral stay where he was. On the 18th of August Lally and his army reached Carical, and saw the English squadron at anchor not far from that town.

The engagement between the hostile squadrons, reported to Lally while at Tanjore, had been a closer and hotter affair than the former encounter, and d'Aché at the end of it had run before the wind and escaped, though with two or three of his ships much shattered in their hulls. The French had lost in killed and wounded from 500 to 600 men, while the English loss is stated to have been only 31 killed and 166 wounded; but, as in the former affair, the English ships had suffered most in their masts and rigging. Both Admiral Pococke and M. d'Aché were wounded by splinters; and Commodore Stevens was wounded in the shoulder by a musket-ball fired by a French officer, who was seen taking a deliberate aim. In both these engagements Pococke's force was inferior, and d'Aché, after the experience he had had, felt no desire to wait till reinforcements, which he believed were expected, should give the English a superiority of force, or replace two of their very bad ships by two good ones. And it was all in vain that d'Estaing entreated, and Lally reproached and threatened:—he insisted that he had done all that could reasonably be expected from him, and that he must be gone. Having left Carical and crossed the Coleroon, Lally quitted the army, and with an escort rode rapidly to Pondicherry, where he arrived on the 28th of August, and instantly summoned a council with the view of stopping the anxious admiral. The council agreed with him that the success of the intended expedition against Madras must depend in good part on the co-operation of the squadron, and joined him in appeals and remonstrances: but d'Aché declared that his

ships were greatly disabled, and his crews much reduced by the combats and by sickness; and on the 2nd of September he took his departure for Mauritius.

The ill-humour of Lally, always attended by violence and imprudence, was heightened by his continual want of money, and by the squadron having failed a few weeks before in intercepting two of the company's ships that were bound to Madras with a good round sum on board. To obtain the nerves of war he resolved, before proceeding on his grand object, the siege of Madras, to make a predatory excursion to Arcot, which was defended only by a few English sepoys and some detachments of Mohammed Ali's cowardly cavalry. But, to make his journey the surer, Lally, by means of the son of the late Chunda Saheb, made a bargain beforehand with the commander of the native troops, who agreed to deliver up the place for 13,000 rupees and employment with the French army. Capturing on his way three or four minor forts, Lally reached Arcot on the 4th of October, and, finding that capital of the Carnatic open to him, he entered with his accustomed pomp and parade, in the midst of long salvos of artillery, wherein was wasted much gunpowder, which, in the state of his finances, he ought to have husbanded. But fresh disappointments awaited this gold-seeker; —all the merchants and wealthier inhabitants had departed before his arrival, and even the poorer sort had concealed their money and most valuable effects. "His late acquisitions," says Orme, "had not hitherto reimbursed the expenses of the field, nor established his credit to borrow: so that his treasury could barely supply the pay of the soldiers, and could not provide the other means of putting his army into motion, and all that the government of Pondicherry could immediately furnish was 10,000 rupees." On his advance he might have taken the important English fort and possession at Chingleput by a *coup de main;* but he had most imprudently neglected the opportunity, and whilst he was parading at Arcot, the government of Madras found means to reinforce the place, and his want of money [illegible] of time now prevented his making [illegible]tempt on Chingleput. Distributing his troops into cantonments, Lally himself returned to Pondicherry, to blame every body and every thing except his own folly and presumption. On his first arrival in the country he had determined to be sole hero in India; and as soon as he had reduced Fort St. David he recalled M. Bussy from the Deccan, speaking contemptuously of the character and exploits of that truly remarkable man. Bussy had hitherto been left by the French court with the mere rank of a lieutenant-colonel, so that not only Lally and Soupires, but also six or seven officers recently arrived from France, ignorant of India and its concerns, and in other essentials his inferiors, were above him in rank, and he was liable to be put under the orders of any one of them. But all these French officers were not animated by the same low spirit as Lally. "The colonels," says Orme, "sensible of the advantages that might be derived from his abilities and his experience and reputation in the country, and how much the opportunities would be precluded by the present inferiority of his rank, signed a declaration, requesting on these considerations he might be appointed a brigadier-general, in supercession to themselves, which would place him next in command to M. Soupires The public zeal which dictated this request conferred as much honour on those who made it, as their testimony on M Bussy. Their names, highly worthy o record on this occasion, were mostly o ancient and noble descent—d'Estaing, d Landivisiau, de la Faire, Breteuil, Verdiere, and Crillon. M. Lally could make no objection, but with his usual asperity imputed the compliment to the influence o M. Bussy's money, instead of his reputation." Lally was a loud and bold talker; he made no secret of his sentiments, and Bussy would have been no Frenchman if he had not resented with vivacity these various attacks on his fame. Ill assorted and ill agreed, with rancorous feelings on both sides, they were to proceed together to capture Madras and root out the English power on the Coromandel coast, even as Clive had rooted out the French in Bengal.* There was slight chance of

* In a letter to Bussy, written on the capture of Fort St. David, Lally had said, "It is the

their succeeding. Lally believed that Bussy must have made an enormous fortune at Golconda, and that, like Dupleix, he might contribute to the common cause by large advances of money: Bussy protested that this was not the case, and Lally, though he did not believe him, could obtain nothing from him. But, as the army must be famished through want of money if they stayed at Pondicherry, it was resolved to move on. By contributing 60,000 rupees of his own, and setting a subscription on foot among the gentlemen of the council of Pondicherry—all very poorly provided with cash or averse to giving or lending—Lally raised 94,000 rupees; and with this insignificant treasure* and an army of 2700 Europeans and 4000 native troops, sepoys, and others, he repaired to Madras, where he arrived on the 12th of December, without money and almost without food for the troops.

The English had made a good use of the time in preparing for his reception. Admiral Pococke, who had quitted the coast to avoid the monsoon, had previously landed 100 marines to be joined to the garrison: a considerable body of native cavalry, headed by an active and intelligent partisan, had been engaged to scour the country, and detachments of sepoys, posted at intervals, and communicating with these flying squadrons of horse, kept open the road to Trichinopoly, and made the roads insecure by which the French were to receive their reinforcements and supplies. Major Laurence, Clive's old superior, and Mr. Pigot, held command within the walls of Madras, where the total of the force collected was 1758 Europeans, 2220 sepoys, and 200 of Mohammed Ali's cavalry—these last being scarcely worth their rations. On the 14th of December the French took possession of the black town, which was open and defenceless; and there the soldiers, breaking open some arrack stores, got drunk and mad, and committed great disorders. As their condition was reported in the fort, a sortie was resolved upon; and 600 chosen men, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Draper (afterwards Sir William) and Major Brereton, with two field-pieces, rushed into the streets of the black town. Unluckily the drummers, who were all little black boys, struck up the grenadiers' march too soon, and this gave warning to the French, who left off their drinking, plundering, and other pastimes, and running to their arms drew up at a point where the streets were very narrow and crossed each other at right angles. Those who were drunk were joined by others who were sober, till the whole number far exceeded that of the English detachment. If Bussy, who was at hand, had made one of the bold and rapid movements which he had been accustomed to make when acting on his own responsibility and for his own glory, he might have taken the enemy in the rear, and the English, blocked up in the narrow streets, must either have surrendered or have been destroyed. But Bussy remained motionless, and afterwards excused his conduct by saying that Lally, his superior, had sent him no orders to move. As the affair went, the detachment retreated to the fort, leaving their two field-pieces behind them: they had lost, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, about 200 men, and had inflicted about an equal loss on the foe. Six officers were killed or mortally wounded, and among them was Major Polier, who, unable to bear the reflections which had been cast upon him for his weak and unwise defence of Fort St. David, threw away his life here to prove that he was no coward. It appears that the close street fight was extended to the interior of some of the houses, and that the rancour between the contending parties was to the last degree furious; for about twenty English soldiers were found in the houses stabbed with bayonets, and with their French antagonists lying dead beside them. Count d'Estaing was taken prisoner at the beginning of the affray

whole of British India which it now remains for us to attack. I do not conceal from you that, having taken Madras, it is my resolution to repair immediately, by land or by sea, to the banks of the Ganges, where your talents and experience will be of the greatest importance to me."

* Mill, Hist. British India.—Orme gives another account:—"The arrival of a vessel at Pondicherry on the 18th, from Mauritius, which brought treasure, together with 100,000 rupees brought by M. Moracin from Tripetti, enabled M. Lally to put the French troops into motion again."

and conveyed into Madras. An Armenian merchant, residing in the black town, paid Lally 80,000 livres for having saved his house from plunder, and a Hindu partisan lent him 12,000 more. With this money some provisions and stores were procured, and the French began to erect some batteries. Lally said that he at first had only intended a bombardment, but that he was encouraged to undertake a regular siege by intelligence that a French ship had arrived at Pondicherry with 1,000,000 of livres. Most of his heavy artillery was still at sea, and a corps of sepoys took his only 13-inch mortar, which was coming by land. All his warlike means were as deficient as those of the garrison were perfect, and dissensions and ill-will against him increased among his officers. His condition was rendered still more desperate by the return of Admiral Pococke to the coast, and by the entrance into the harbour of Madras of two frigates and six of the company's ships, having on board 600 king's troops fresh from England. This was on the 16th of February (1759), when Lally had been two months and four days under the walls of Madras. He ought to have been gone long before, but now to stay or go was not at his option; even before the English reinforcement began to land, the officer who commanded in the trenches quitted his post without orders, and nothing was thought of but retreat and flight. And all his money, including the 1,000,000 livres from Pondicherry, and all his provisions, were exhausted; he had thrown away his last bomb three weeks before, and he had blazed away nearly all his gunpowder. Again pouring out invectives and blaming everybody but himself, Lally on the night of the 17th decamped, as silently and expeditiously as he could, with his army in a mutinous state, and his marauding hussars threatening to go over to the English. He was distressed greatly on his retreat by the want of money and provisions; the natives knowing his habits removed or concealed as much of their rice and cattle as was possible; and occasionally he had to fight in van and rear, and in straggling or foraging parties, the sharp execution of the flying columns of native horse, and the deadly animosity of the coolies and colleries, who glided like ghosts round his camp and stabbed in the dark. But as the treasury at Madras was also in a state of exhaustion, through the heavy drains made upon it during the last six months, and as several of the chiefs at Madura and other places were showing symptoms of disaffection, the English, so far from pursuing Lally immediately, did not take the field till the 6th of March. Then, with 1150 Europeans, 1570 sepoys, 1120 colleries, 1956 horse, and ten field-pieces, of which two were twelve-pounders, Major Laurence commenced his march to Conjeveram, where Lally had concentrated his forces, but was looking in vain for some small detachments which he had entrusted to the rebellious brother of Mohammed Ali —for they had all been murdered by the ally whom they had been sent to assist, and who was now anxious to renew his friendship with the English and his allegiance to his brother, seeing that the star of Lally's fortune was becoming but a glimmering and uncertain light. For twenty-two days the French and English armies lay encamped in sight of each other. After this inactivity the English struck off for Wandewash, entered that town, and began to break ground against the fort. The French hurried to defend the place, and the English giving them the slip hastened back and took the more important fort of Conjeveram. On the 28th of May both Laurence and Lally put their armies into cantonments.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FRENCH AND CAFFRES LANDED AT PONDICHERRY.

In the hour of danger or alarm the presence of Clive on the Coromandel coast had been earnestly desired by all, and the presidency had repeatedly urged his return; but Clive was equally wanted then, and continued to be wanted, in Bengal, which he wisely refused to quit until affairs should be settled. Admiral Pococke continued to cruise between Bombay and Pondicherry, with a view of intercepting a fresh squadron which the French expected from the Mauritius. Towards the end of June three of the company's ships reached Madras with 100 recruits, and the welcome intelligence that the enterprising Coote, now a lieutenant-colonel, might be shortly expected on the coast with 1000 of king's troops. But the ships brought another notice not quite so agreeable, namely, that the company intended to send out no more money to either of the presidencies till the following year (1760), as they believed that the treasures acquired in Bengal ought to suffice for the current expenses of all British India. At the end of July the first division of the promised troops arrived at Negapatam, where Admiral Pococke lay with his squadron. On the 20th of August Pococke bore away for Trincomalee, in the island of Ceylon, where he discovered his old adversary, M. d'Aché, with eleven ships of the line (three of which were fresh from Europe) and three frigates. The English squadron consisted of nine ships of the line, one frigate, two of the company's ships, and a fire-ship; their entire number of guns being 174 less than that of the French. Pococke determined on an immediate action, but the currents, the wind, and the weather prevented the close meeting of the fleets till the 10th of September, when, after a sharp action of two hours' duration, the careful Frenchman once more retired before the flag of Pococke. From the usual difference in their modes of firing, the English suffered most in their rigging, and the French lost the greater number of men. D'Aché, having all his topmasts standing, got safe to Pondicherry —which was his object—several days before Pococke could reach Negapatam. The arrival of the squadron saved the French council from absolute despair: it brought to them only 180 men, but it brought what was more needed than soldiers; it poured into the empty coffers at Pondicherry specie to the amount of about 16,000*l.* sterling, and a quantity of diamonds valued at 17,000*l.*, which had been taken in an English East Indiaman. But d'Aché had scarcely landed these precious commodities, when he again intimated that he must leave the coast immediately and return to the Mauritius; his orders being peremptory to take care of his ships, whose loss France could ill afford at this crisis of a losing war in Europe, in Canada, and nearly everywhere else. But the French on shore represented that Pondicherry must be lost, that everything they had obtained on the coast of Coromandel must be sacrificed to the English fleet and army, if the ships were withdrawn; all the inhabitants of Pondicherry, civil and military, assembled in council and signed a vehement protest; but neither this nor anything else could prevail upon d'Aché to alter or delay his departure. He was, however, induced to land and leave behind him 400 Caffres who had been serving in his fleet, and 500 Europeans, partly marines and partly sailors.

Before the arrival of the dollars and diamonds, the French army in cantonments were reduced to an extremity of distress, and even Lally's own regiment

had mutinied for want of pay. The English, who had surprised and taken the fort of Covrepawk in July, were encouraged, by the disorganized state of the enemy, to make an attempt upon Wandewash, and on the 26th of September their whole army, under the command of Colonel Brereton, marched from Conjeveram for this purpose. Their approach, however, restored the French to some discipline and spirit; they gathered within and around the menaced fort, and an assault was repelled with the loss of 200 of the English. But in other directions the French lost ground almost daily; they were in rags and half starved, and Lally's only remaining hope was that the money received at Pondicherry was more than was reported, and that he and his troops might obtain the greater part of it. Nor were quarrels and cabals in his own camp and quarters the only bitter fruit which Lally gathered by recalling Bussy from the Deccan. The English took advantage of the absence of that prevailing man to commence negotiations with several native chiefs in the Deccan, and even with Salibut Jung *himself*, and Clive from Bengal had detached Colonel Forde to the Northern Circars, those valuable provinces which had been ceded to Bussy. Forde, with 500 British troops, 2100 native troops, 6 field-pieces, 24 six-pounders for battery, a howitzer, and an eight inch mortar, proceeded by sea to Vizagapatam. There he landed and joined the army of Anunderauze, who had engaged to cooperate against the French in the hope that the English would secure him in sundry territorial claims, and eventually make him sovereign of the Deccan. Before starting together a treaty was agreed upon between the English colonel and the Indian rajah. In the first place all plunder was to be equally divided; all the countries that should be conquered were to be left to the rajah, who was to collect the revenues, &c., with the exception, however, of the seaports and towns at the mouths of the rivers, which, with the revenues of the districts annexed to them, were to belong to the company; and no treaty for the disposal or restitution of the possessions of either party was to be made without the consent of both. And it was finally agreed, though not without great difficulty on the part of the rajah, that he should supply 50,000 rupees per month for the expense of the English army, and 6000 for the expenses of the officers. They then advanced to Peddapore, and there encountered M. Conflans, who had been left by Bussy in command of a French force, strong enough to have kept in awe the unwarlike Hindus, but too weak to stand against the English force now unexpectedly brought against them. In preparing for battle Forde's first care was to get his precious allies, the troops of the rajah, out of the way, for he knew that they would not fight, and could produce only confusion. In numbers Conflans's French troops were equal to Forde's, and the defensive position they occupied was a good one: their artillery was abundant, and to oppose to the English sepoys they had 6000 sepoys of their own, and 500 native horse. But M. Conflans quitted his strong ground, the French infantry got into disorder in pursuing a portion of Forde's sepoys, and then the English troops, who had been concealed by a standing crop of Indian corn, fell upon the French, routed them with a terrible loss, and took the best of their field-pieces. Conflans, further discouraged by the resolute behaviour of some of the English sepoys under Captain Knox, retreated to his camp; but notwithstanding the advantages of the ground and the fire of some heavy artillery which he had kept there, he was soon driven from the height by Colonel Forde. Some of the French threw down their arms and cried for quarter; but the greater part made a *sauve qui peut* flight. Conflans had had the forethought to send off the military treasure on two camels, but the spoils of the field were very considerable:—30 pieces of cannon, most of which were brass; 50 tumbrils and other carriages laden with ammunition; 7 mortars from eight to thirteen inches, with a large provision of shells; 1000 draught bullocks, and all the tents of the French battalion. M. Conflans galloped from the field on a good horse; and it is said that he never drew rein until he reached, at night, the town of Rajahmundry, nearly forty miles from the field of battle. When

the rout of the French began, Forde, thinking that they might then have some heart and be of some use, called up Anunderauze's 500 horse; but he might as well have called spirits from the vasty deep, for these black cavaliers, and all their infantry as well, with the rajah in the midst of them, had conveniently found a deep but dry tank, where they had remained cowering during the whole of the action, and from which they refused to move so long as there were cannon-balls and bullets flying about.* And, unfortunately, Anunderauze would no more pay than fight, so that for several weeks Forde, who had spent all the money he had brought with him, was reduced to a stand-still. The French, however, still worse off, kept retreating; Rajahmundry was abandoned, and Conflans sought refuge in Masulipatam, urging Salibut Jung to send him some assistance, and representing in strong terms to that subahdar, that the English if left unopposed would make themselves masters, not merely of the sea-coast which he had ceded to Bussy, but of the whole of the Deccan. Salibut Jung responded to these appeals by putting an army in motion, and by collecting other troops at Golconda and Hyderabad. After a mischievous delay Colonel Forde obtained a little money from the rajah, and marching through Ellore, where several native chiefs joined him, he arrived, on the 6th of March, 1759, in the neighbourhood of Masulipatam, Conflans's abiding place, and the most important and strongest place the French had on that coast. The troops within were more numerous than the besiegers, yet Colonel Forde, by making an assault on three points at the same moment, induced Conflans to surrender, and after a siege of only twelve days Masulipatam remained to the English.†

The victorious flag had not been hoisted a week over the walls, when two French ships, with a reinforcement of 300 men, appeared in the offing. They went back; but the army of the subahdar, which had been marching to the relief of Conflans, halted where it was, and soon received in their camp the English commander, not as an enemy, but as a friend and ally. Salibut Jung, seeing that the English were everywhere victorious, and considering that their protection and assistance would be as valuable as that of the French had been, readily entered into a new treaty, by which he ceded a considerable territory about Masulipatam to the English, bound himself not to permit for the future any French settlement in his dominions, and to oblige the French army of observation collected at Rajahmundry to evacuate the country and cross the Kistna within fifteen days; the English on their part agreeing to support him against his enemies in general, and his rebellious brother Nizam Ali in particular. It was also stipulated that the subahdar should never more have recourse to French assistance or call in any troops of that nation; that Anunderauze should not be called to account for whatsoever he had collected out of the governments of the French, nor for the tributes of his own country for the present year. Colonel Forde, who had been received with high honours in the subahdar's camp, had the better part or the greater advantage in this treaty, as his promises were general and prospective, and the subahdar's cessions positive and immediate.*

As soon as the compact was concluded, the subahdar offered to Colonel Forde, for his own private account and profit, a considerable district as jaghire if he would instantly join him and march against his rebellious younger brother Nizam Ali; but Forde at the same time invited the subahdar to join the English in an immediate expedition against the French at Rajahmundry, then avowedly under the protection of the subahdar's elder brother Bassaulet Jung, who had an army on foot

* Orme.

† When Forde ordered the assault his condition was very critical: he had only powder for his batteries for two days; the army of Salibut Jung was approaching; a French force, nearly equal to his own, had collected again at Rajahmundry; and Conflans was expecting the daily arrival of 300 fresh troops from Pondicherry.

* In addition to Masulipatam, eight districts, as well as the jurisdiction over the territory of Nizampatam, with the districts of Codover and Wacalmannar, were granted to the English without the reserve of fine or military service. The whole of the territory thus ceded extended eighty miles along the coast and twenty inland: the revenue was estimated at 400,000 rupees a-year.

at no great distance. The subahdar, finding Forde immoveable, quitted him and marched away into the interior in no very good humour with his new allies. As Forde prepared to march against them the French broke up from Rajahmundry, crossed the Kistna, and marched to the westward, the subahdar's elder brother having promised that he would take them into his pay in a short time. The English factories which had been swept away by the successes of Bussy were immediately re-established, and Forde with his little army remained at Masulipatam till he should receive further orders from the presidency of Bengal, or rather from Clive, who originated and directed every great measure, taking, in all cases of indecision and doubt, the responsibility upon himself, and not unfrequently treating the council with contempt. For many months he had acted as if he had been governor-general of Bengal or of all India, though his real place was on the Coromandel coast, and his rank merely that of governor of Fort St. David. The directors at home, after the catastrophe at Calcutta and the misconduct of Mr. Drake, had appointed a very absurd sort of government by rotation, but the members of this government themselves made Clive their president; and immediately after, learning the particulars of his victory at Plassey, the court of directors sent out his appointment to be governor of Bengal.*

Meer Jaffier very soon required the assistance of those who had made him nabob. Many native chiefs rebelled against him, and far and near he was almost surrounded by enemies, all eager for his throne, or for a slice out of his rich territories. Mohammed Kooly Khan the lord of *Allahabad*, the rajahs Sunder-Sing and Bulwant-Sing, and, most powerful of all, his neighbour Soujah Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, were united—as far as such beings could unite in one object—against Meer Jaffier; and their cause received the high sanction of the name and afterwards the assistance of the Mogul of Delhi's eldest son, the Shah Zada, who had established himself in Rohilcund, and had, at the time, a considerable army of Rohillas, half soldiers and half robbers by profession, but a hardier and a braver race than any in the lower parts of Hindustan. In a short time the Shah Zada descended from Rohilcund with an army of 40,000 men, Rohillas, Mahrattas, Jauts, and Afghans; and other forces were expected to join him on his advance. The successor of Suraj-u-Dowlah thought he had no help or hope except in Clive, and he showered letters and messages upon him, and constantly besieged with prayers and agents the new English resident at Moorshedabad—Mr. WARREN HASTINGS—who had arrived in India as a young writer in the year 1750, as poor and as friendless as Clive, who, if not the first to discover his abilities and energy of character, appears to have been the first that gave him any important promotion. Warren Hastings had a near view of the imbecility and confusion of the nabob's court and government—a confusion worse confounded by the intrigues and vices of the nabob's son Meeran—and he wrote nearly every day to his patron Clive that all classes confided in him, and in him alone; that without his intervention the whole fabric of government would fall to pieces by intestine broils, and Orissa and Bahar be severed from Bengal even before the arrival of the invaders from Rohilcund. Weakened by the force detached to the Circars under Forde, and by other detachments sent to Madras, Clive at this moment could only count in Bengal about 300 British infantry, 100 artillery, and 2500 disciplined sepoys. Yet with this force he not only resolved to meet the mighty confederacy which threatened Meer Jaffier, but he also sent orders to Forde to continue his conquests, and then to proceed, not to Bengal to join and assist him, but, if needed, to Madras, there to finish the Indian story of Count Lally. He informed Warren Hastings that the dissension and treachery reigning at Moorshedabad gave him far more uneasiness than the Shah Zada's army. To the trembling nabob himself he wrote:—"I would not have you think of coming to any terms with him, but proceed to take the necessary measures to defend your city to the last. On Monday

* Sir John Malcolm, Life of Clive.

the last of this month I shall take the field, and will have everything in readiness to march to your assistance if necessary. Rest assured that the English are your staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken part."* This letter was dated the 10th of February, 1759. A few days after Clive heard that the nabob was thinking of purchasing the retreat of the Shah Zada, and he instantly wrote to dissuade him from a measure which would only have tempted others to make similar inroads. "I have heard," wrote Clive, "a piece of intelligence which I can scarce give credit to; it is that you are going to offer a sum of money to the king's son: if you do this you will have the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you have none left in your treasury." And then with a little cajolery to flatter the vanity of the poor creature he was writing to, he added—"What will be said if the great Jaffier Ali Khan, subah of this country, who commands an army of 60,000 men, should offer money to a boy who has scarcely a soldier with him?" Clive also wrote repeatedly to the Hindu governor of Patna, Ramnarrain, whose fidelity to the nabob was much doubted, and who appears indeed to have almost concluded a bargain with the enemy to open the gates of Patna to them as soon as they should approach it from Allahabad. On the 12th of February Clive conjured this governor to be firm and bold, and defend the city to the utmost; and the concluding words of his letter contained a fact which was well calculated to make an impression. "I have this day," said Clive, "pitched my tent, and, with the blessing of God, if it be necessary, I will come to your assistance." But the strangest part of the active correspondence carried on at this juncture was a letter addressed by the Mogul's son, the Shah Zada, in imperial and Oriental style, to "The most High and Mighty Protector of the Great"—*i. e.* Clive. "In this happy time," said the epistle, "with a view of making the tour of Patna and Bengal, I have erected my standard of glory at this place. It is my pure intention to bestow favour upon you, the high and mighty, and all faithful servants, agreeable to their conduct. This world is like a garden of flowers interspersed with weeds and thorns; I shall, therefore, root out the bad, that the faithful and good ryots (God willing) may rest in peace and quietness. Know you, who are great, that it is proper you should pay a due obedience to this my firman, and make it your business to pay your respects to me like a faithful servant, which will be great and happy for you. It is proper you should be earnest in doing this, when, by the blessing of God, you stand high in my favour. Know this must be done." Clive also received a flowery epistle from the Shah Zada's chief minister, and another from his chief general, Fyaz Ali Khan, who assured him that the Shah had thoughts of doing great things by his (Clive's) counsel and in conjunction with him. Apprehending that this part of the correspondence, and other matters, might come to the knowledge of Meer Jaffier, and cause great consternation, Clive enclosed all the letters to the nabob, in one of his own, wherein he said that several of the Shah Zada's agents had been with him. "They made me," he observed, "offers of provinces upon provinces, with whatever my heart could desire; but, could he give, as well as offer me, the whole empire of Hindustan, it would have no weight with the English. I am well assured, too, that he wrote to every man of consequence in these parts, which convinces me that he has designs against these provinces. It is the custom of the English to treat the persons of ambassadors as sacred, and I told the Shah Zada's agents as much; but at the same time warned them never to come near me again, for if they did I would take their heads for their pains."* Clive, however, who had received a high title of nobility from the Great Mogul, together with the confirmation of Meer Jaffier's elevation to the musnud, was well aware that the name of the descendant of Tamerlane still

* Sir John Malcolm, Life.

* Letters as given by Orme and Sir John Malcolm.

imposed some respect on millions of the natives of India, although the power of that imperial name was now the mere shadow of a shade, and defied and set at nought even by those who paid their half superstitious, half involuntary homage to the name; and on this as on other occasions he most carefully sought to avoid giving offence to the feelings and punctilios of the country. In dismissing the last envoys of the Shah Zada, he wrote a letter to that prince, in the most respectful terms, and expressive of a still higher reverence for his father the Great Mogul, who had neither ordered the expedition of his son, nor had the power to prevent it, being in fact, even at Delhi, little more than a state prisoner in the hands of his ministers and nobles. "I have had the honour," wrote Clive, "to receive your highness's firman. It gives me great concern to find that this country must become a scene of troubles. I beg leave to inform you that I have been favoured with a sunnud (patent) from the emperor, appointing me a munsubdar of the rank of 6000 foot and 5000 horse, which constitutes me a servant of his; and as I have not received any orders, either from the emperor or vizier, acquainting me of your coming down here, I cannot pay that due regard to your highness's orders which I should otherwise wish to do. I must further beg leave to inform you, that I am under the strictest engagements with the present subahdar of these provinces to assist him at all times; and it is not the ustom of the English nation to be guilty of insincerity."*

Clive began his march on the 25th of February, and arrived in a few days at Moorshedabad. Here he had a long conference with the nabob, when he endeavoured to make him sensible of his past misconduct, which, by creating internal dissension, had brought upon him the evils of war and invasion. According to his own account he must have rated Meer Jaffier very roundly, but then, to revive his spirits and to prove to the always doubting people that there was no interruption to their friendship, he rode abroad on the same elephant with the nabob, and showed a determination to support him in his administration. And when, on the 13th of March, he left Moorshedabad to advance upon Patna, he took the nabob's son with him. Just before starting he wrote a letter to the secret committee, telling them that the enemy from the north had reached the river which divides Oude from Bahar, and were expected soon to be at Patna, the capital of the latter province; but he added, in a tone of perfect confidence, that with his 400 English and 2500 sepoys he would soon give a good account of the Shah Zada, although his army was estimated to be 50,000 strong. At this moment he did not know whether M. Law and his fugitive band had joined the invaders or not.

On arriving at Shahabad, Clive received intelligence that Ramnarrain, the governor of Patna, had abandoned his post and gone over to the Shah. Upon this he wrote to Meer Jaffier, telling him to give over the sports and pastimes of the Hooley—the carnival of the Indians—in which the nabob was then busily engaged at Moorshedabad, and hasten to the field if he desired to preserve his country. To Ramnarrain, whom he had served on many occasions, and whom he had preserved from the treachery and rapacity of Meer Jaffier and Meeran, he wrote at the same moment—"I have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, the letter I have now received from Mr. Amyatt; nor could aught but the great confidence I have in him induce me to give credit to its contents. Have you no sense of the obligations you are under to me for all the cares and pains I have taken for you? If you had not courage equal to the occasion, yet what could have induced you to act so imprudent a part? What power has the Shah Zada to resist the united forces of the nabob and the English? Think, then, what will be your fate. For God's sake reflect on the duty you owe to your master, to my friendship, and to your own safety. Turn from this bad design, and act in such a manner that your master may be satisfied with you, and the world acknowledge you worthy of the friendship I have shown you. Should you, from want of courage,

* Letters as given in Orme and Sir John Malcolm.

forsake your city, be assured it will not remain ten days in the Shah Zada's power." The fact, however, proved to be that Ramnarrain had not run away to the enemy, but was only thinking of doing so; and when he received this letter, after some few words on the insufficiency of his means of defence, he declared that he would defend Patna, and prove true to the nabob. In effect, encouraged by the rapid marches of the English, that Hindu did prove true and steady, and the next news Clive received of him was, that he had repelled two assaults made upon the place. However, not to trust too much to Hindu valour, Clive hurried forward a detachment of his own sepoys under the command of Ensign Mathews to assist in the defence. But the dread of Clive's name alone was sufficient to disperse the invading army: and on the 5th of April, the day before Mathews could reach Patna, the Shah Zada, though he had possessed himself of some of the bastions, raised the siege, and began to retreat in the greatest disorder. M. Law with his small party joined the prince on the day of this retreat, but could not prevail upon him to halt and make another attack.

While on his march from Moorshedabad, Clive had received a letter from Meer Jaffier, informing him that he had the commands of the Great Mogul to seize the person of his rebellious son, the Shah Zada. The imperial firman which the nabob enclosed was of course the edict of the Grand Vizier Gazee-u-Deen, against whose usurped authority the young prince had in the first instance taken up arms; it ran in these words:—"Know that you are under the shadow of my favour. Some ill-designing people have turned the brain of my beloved son, and are carrying him to the eastern part of the empire, which must be the cause of much trouble and ruin to my country. I therefore order you, who are my servant, to proceed immediately to Patna, and secure the person of my son, and keep him there. You are likewise to punish his attendants, that other people may take warning thereby. In doing this you will gain my favour and have a good name. Know this must be done." The vizier, moreover, wrote a letter of the same purport to Clive himself, who could thus quote the sanction of the court of Delhi to and for all he undertook. The "Daring in War," the "Protector of the Great," entered Patna without any parade of triumph, but there were few that saw him there but felt he was in reality the lord of all that part of India. Meanwhile the Shah Zada, continuing his precipitate retreat, had crossed the river Caramnassa into Oude. The Nabob of Oude, who had prepared to join him if he had been successful, now, with true Indian faith, declared himself the enemy of the fugitive prince, who, deserted by the troops and abandoned by his followers, knew not whom to trust or whither to fly. Considering that Clive had more power and more generosity than any one else to whom he could address himself, he wrote a humble and imploring letter to him, and forwarded it by an officer who enjoyed his confidence. "I find," says Clive, in a note written at the moment, "that he wants, in his present distress, to throw himself upon the English, from a conviction that there is none else in whom he can trust. I have consulted with Ramnarrain, who is of opinion that the nabob can never be safe, should a person of his high rank be admitted into these provinces; and that his presence would expose the country to continual commotions. I have, therefore, answered him, that my connexions with the nabob were of so solemn a nature as would not allow of my affording him any protection; and on that account advised him to keep out of the way, as I was now upon the point of marching to the Caramnassa." Notwithstanding the decided answer he got, the fugitive prince, in the extremity of his distress, sent several more letters or messages to Clive, who resolutely persisted in his first determination, but, out of compassion, sent his unhappy correspondent a present of 500 gold mohurs, or about 1000*l.* sterling, to enable him to escape to some safer country. In one of his letters to the prince—apparently the last he wrote—Clive said: "I have received repeated orders from the vizier, and even from the emperor, not only to oppose your highness, but even to lay hold of

your person. I am sorry to acquaint your highness with these disagreeable things, but I cannot help it. Were I to assist your highness in any respect, it would be attended with the ruin of this country. It is better that one should suffer, however great, than that so many thousands should be rendered unhappy. I have only to recommend your highness to the Almighty's protection. I wish to God it were in my power to assist you, but it is not. I am now on my march to the Caramnassa, and earnestly recommend it to you to withdraw before I arrive." The Shah Zada took this last hint, continued his flight, and was reported to be going to take refuge in the Gazipore country. Clive then directed his arms against some Rajpoot and hill chiefs of Bahar, who had invited and assisted the Shah Zada, and, having reduced them to submission, rather by policy than by fighting, having tranquillized the whole country, by processes which seemed as rapid as magic, and having left a small force in Patna to aid Ramnarrain, he returned quietly to Moorshedabad, and thence to Calcutta.*

Great were the services he had rendered to his ally, Meer Jaffier, and, if not to that poor phantom the Great Mogul, to the grand vizier, who reigned in his name, and whose firmans were considered by the natives as the voice and will of the descendant of Aurengzebe. The vizier, as one mark of favour, informed Clive that the English might establish a factory at Delhi, the royal city; and he assured "The Daring in War" that the Mogul would show him the greatest favour, and that his honours should be increased. Meer Jaffier, who owed everything to him, gave more substantial and personal proofs of his gratitude, conferring on Clive for life, as a jaghire, or estate, the quit-rent which the company was bound to pay to the nabob for the extensive lands held by them to the south of Calcutta—which quit-rent was reputed to be worth thirty lacs of rupees, or about 30,000*l.* sterling, per annum. Mr. Warren Hastings had the satisfaction of drawing up, at the nabob's request, the form of the letter to be written to the council at Calcutta, to acquaint them with this splendid donation to his patron. When it was suggested to Meer Jaffier that the gift was enormous, he replied that his obligations were commensurate—that the services he had received from Clive were incalculable—and that his conduct after the battle of Plassey and on his first entrance into Moorshedabad merited the highest reward; for, when all the inhabitants expected to be laid under contribution by his victorious army, he had secured their property and their persons, taking nothing from them, and permitting nothing to be taken by his troops or by any one else.* Sir John Malcolm, who has perhaps too perfect a sympathy with the hero of his narrative, and who certainly speaks too frequently with the tone of an advocate or special-pleader, says of the great jaghire, and Clive's acceptance of it—"Though he appears to have thought that the high titles obtained for him from Delhi should have been accompanied by a jaghire, there exists no evidence among all the documents I have examined to show that he had any previous intimation of its amount, or that he, in any shape, compromised either his personal honour or his duty to the government he served by accepting this grant. Conscious that he had performed great services to the nabob, he received this reward as a recompense which that prince had a right to bestow, and which was one conformable to the usage of the country, and rendered more appropriate, according to that usage, from the high honour which the Emperor of Delhi had, at the request of Meer Jaffier, conferred upon him. Clive gave a complete proof of his anticipation of the approbation of his superiors in England, and of his wish to give publicity to this transaction, by accepting, as his jaghire, an assignment of the quit-rent, or government share, of the lands farmed by the company, in the vicinity of Calcutta. This arrangement, which

* Orme.—Sir John Malcolm, Life of Clive. Sir John proves, by documents and incontrovertible facts, that a very considerable portion of Mr. Mill's account of Clive's proceedings, at this critical moment, in Bahar, is seriously incorrect.

* Evidence of Mr. Sykes before the House of Commons.

placed his income in the hands of the company, though it presented the best possible security, would never have been consented to by a person who had not acted with a perfect consciousness that he was violating no duty and inflicting no injury on the interests either of individuals or the public. These were evidently Clive's sentiments; and the transaction, at the time of its occurrence, appears to have been generally viewed in the same light." A more recent and much less partial writer—one fresh from India, and who may have studied the subject on the spot—says, "This present we think Clive justified in accepting. It was a present which, from its very nature, could be no secret. In fact, the company itself was his tenant, and, by its acquiescence, signified its approbation of Meer Jaffier's grant." * We shall soon find, however, that the company, a large section of the British parliament, and no inconsiderable portion of the nation, took a very different view of the whole matter; and that "Clive's Jaghire" continued to be made a theme of declamation and a subject of reproach to him till the end of his life, and indeed beyond that period. Nor was the gratitude of Meer Jaffier of a very enduring or steady kind. The nabob was made to feel every day that the power and consideration of the Englishman were far greater than his own; and that he, who had put him on a throne and defended him upon it, could at any time overthrow him, place him in a prison, or abandon him to the tender mercies of his enemies.† He looked round for some other support, and for some alliance with strength enough to curb the authority of Clive, and impose on his own discontented chiefs, whose animosities, though secret, were sharp, and every day increasing through the rash violence of his son Meeran and his own insincerity and broken agreements.

No native prince could furnish a force that would look the little English army in the face. As for the French power, broken by Colonel Forde in the Circars and the Deccan, and fast breaking in the Carnatic by the folly of Lally and the bravery and skill of Major Coote, it was utterly annihilated in Bengal. The old might and fame of the Portuguese was now only a tradition, nor could it be said that the Dutch on the Indian continent possessed much more power than the Portuguese. Yet, in his impatience of the English supremacy, and in his total ignorance of the decline of the Dutch government in Europe, Meer Jaffier looked to this people for assistance; and, though they had been slow in acknowledging his authority, and had been guilty of several slights very offensive to his pride, he opened secret communications with the Dutch factory at Chinchura, which had witnessed, with jealousy and dread, the British conquest of Chandernagore in its near neighbourhood.* The places were only two miles distant from each other, and the near sight of the English flag was worse than a nightmare to the Dutch factory, who now wrote the most urgent letters to the governor of Batavia, exhorting him to fit out an expedition for the Hooghly, in order to balance the English power in Bengal. There was at the moment no war in Europe between Holland and England; but the governors and factors of the various European nations

* Mr. Macaulay.

† Clive's own account is this:—"About the month of November, 1758, a prevailing party at the Nabob Jaffier Ali Khan's durbar [court], headed by Meeran, his son, had prejudiced him to look with an evil and jealous eye on the power and influence of the English in the provinces, and taught him to think and look upon himself as a cipher, bearing the name of Subah only. From subsequent concurring circumstances, it must have been at that period, and from this cause, that we imagine a private negotiation was set on foot between the nabob and the Dutch, that the latter should bring a military force into the provinces to join the former and balance our power and sway. The Dutch, stimulated by envy at our very advantageous situation, and a sense of their own very small importance, readily embraced the overture, and hoped another Plassey affair for themselves."—*MS., entitled "A Narrative of the Disputes with the Dutch in Bengal," found by Sir John Malcolm among Clive's papers.*

* The nabob had entered into these intrigues with the Dutch before the invasion of the Shah Zada; and after Clive's conduct at that crisis he would willingly have broken them off. But when he saw the Dutch arrive in the Hooghly in such great force he fancied that they must triumph over the English, and that in assisting them he should be pursuing the wise policy of siding with the strongest.

in India seem to have been wont, whenever it suited their purposes, to adopt and act upon the principle of the old buccaneers in America—that European treaties did not extend to the regions in which they were living, and that there was no peace beyond the equinoctial line. The authorities of Batavia were as eager to send an expedition as was the factory at Chinchura to request it, and in a short time accounts were received at Calcutta that the Dutch were preparing a strong armament. It appears to have been known from the first that the destination was Bengal; but there was some doubt as to which of the Indian potentates had invited it or engaged to co-operate with it.

Warren Hastings, though so quick and sagacious, was deceived for a time by the tales told him at Moorshedabad; and he (on the 29th of July, 1759) wrote to Clive that the Nabob Meer Jaffier was led to suspect that the Dutch were in league with the powerful sovereign of Oude. Even Clive himself was deceived for some time, not because he was so credulous as to place any confidence in Meer Jaffier's faith, but because he counted upon his weakness and womanly timidity. The nabob played his part well. When Clive sent notice to him of the Batavia armament, he pretended to be greatly alarmed, and expressed his hope that the English, in virtue of the treaty subsisting, would join their forces to his to oppose and prevent the invasion of his dominions. He also sent Clive the copy of a strong letter he had addressed to the Dutch factory. Early in the month of August a Dutch ship arrived in the Hooghly with European troops on board. Clive reported this arrival to Meer Jaffier, who, after betraying some confusion, sent a second letter to the Dutch factory, and ordered his troops at the town of Hooghly to join the English and prevent any Dutch ships or troops from ascending the river. The Dutch solemnly protested that the ship which had arrived in the lower part of the river had been driven in by stress of weather, and that she and the troops on board would depart in peace as soon as they had obtained water and provisions. The vessel, however, continued to lie where she was, and attempts were made to send soldiers up to Chinchura by concealing them in the bottom of native boats; but Clive issued his mandate that every Dutch or native boat should be stopped and searched. The gentlemen at Chinchura remonstrated and protested against these proceedings on the part of a friendly power; but Clive continued to stop their soldiers and to send them back to their ship, telling the gentlemen of the factory that he was in Bengal in a double capacity; that as an English officer, while England was engaged in a war with France, he was justified by the laws of nations in searching all vessels whatever, not knowing but that they might introduce French troops into the country; and that, as an auxiliary to the Great Mogul, he was under the necessity, by solemn treaty, to oppose the introduction of any European or foreign troops whatsoever into Bengal. The Dutch, perhaps proud of their great writers on that subject, cited the laws of nations on their own side, and kept pressing their warlike preparations all the time; and the mind that can condemn Clive's conduct in this particular, and call it an attacking "without provocation the ships and troops of a nation in friendship with this country," must previously have lost its perception in the muddiest mazes of metaphysics. If Clive had seen with such organs all would have been lost. Early in October Meer Jaffier arrived in person at Calcutta, as if merely intending to honour Clive with a visit. A day or two after advices came from below of the arrival of six more Dutch ships of a large size, and crammed with troops, partly Europeans and partly Malays, from Batavia and other Dutch settlements in the islands. "Now," says Clive, or a pen that wrote for him, "the Dutch mask fell off, and the nabob (conscious of his having given his assent to their coming, and at the same time of our attachment and his own unfaithful dealings with us) was greatly confused and disconcerted. He, however, seemed to make light of it; told the governor (Clive) he was going to reside three or four days at his fort of Hooghly, where he would chastise the insolence of the Dutch, and drive them soon out of the river again. On the 19th of October

he left Calcutta; and, in place of his going to his fort at Hooghly, he took up his residence at Cojah Wazeed's garden, about half-way between that and Chinchura;* a plain indication that he had no apprehensions from the Dutch, whom he received there in the most gracious manner he could, more like friends and allies than as enemies to him and his country." †

In three or four days Clive received a letter from the nabob, informing him that he had thought proper to grant some indulgence to the Dutch in their trade, and that the Dutch on their part had engaged to leave the river with their ships and troops as soon as the season would permit. But this reference to the seasons was unfortunate, inasmuch as, at the time of his writing, the season permitted their departure with the greatest safety. Clive, from the tenor of the letter, and the whole course of the nabob's conduct, felt assured that the Dutch had no intention to quit the river, and that Meer Jaffier had given his permission to them to bring up their troops if they could. This Clive was determined they should not do; and the council at Calcutta heartily agreed with him. The nabob had not ventured to withdraw the orders he had given to the English to oppose the Dutch. A very few days later, intelligence was received that the Dutch armament was actually moving up the river towards Calcutta, and that the Dutch agents were enlisting troops of every denomination at Chinchura, Cossimbuzar, and even as far up the country as Patna, and this plainly with the connivance of Meer Jaffier, and the more open assistance of his son Meeran. Clive saw that the junction of the armament from below and the troops from above, with the force already collected within the walls of Chinchura, would be followed by the declaration of the nabob in favour of the Dutch, and an immediate movement upon the English settlements. His force in Europeans was, at the moment, actually inferior in number to that of the Dutch on board the seven ships alone, without counting those in garrison at Chinchura; for the force from Batavia, now accurately reported, consisted of 700 Europeans and 800 Malays—the latter a far braver race of men than the natives of Bengal. There was no time to be lost—this was no season for indulging in subtleties and nice distinctions, or for turning over the pages of Grotius and Puffendorf—and Clive resolved to proceed at once against the Dutch as if they were open instead of secret enemies. At the critical moment some of the council were startled by the notion of infringing the treaties of peace existing between the United Provinces and Great Britain, and of commencing a war on their own responsibility. But Clive said that "a public man may sometimes be called upon to act with a halter round his neck;" and the Dutch by their conduct seemed to justify hostilities and to give them a merely defensive character on the part of the English, for they continued to enlist native troops more openly than ever, they denied the English the right of search, they insulted several English officers, they attempted to seduce the sepoys in English pay, and, thinking their

* This Cojah, or Khodjah, Wazeed, who was distinguished by the title of "The Glory of Merchants," was a person of great wealth and importance—a sort of second Omichund, who had lived a life of intrigue, serving and betraying all parties in turns. He had been an agent for the French, an agent for the English, but was latterly become an agent for the Dutch, and the secret medium by which they communicated with the nabob, and the nabob with them. For some time before this visit to him at his garden on the Hooghly, Meer Jaffier had treated this "Glory of Merchants" with great favour and distinction. But the circumstances did not prevent Clive from seizing the persons of Cojah Wazeed and his son a short time after the nabob's visit when they were going to Moorshedabad. Warren Hastings had some difficulty in cooling the wrath of the nabob; but he ingeniously represented that Cojah Wazeed was the prime instigator of these troubles, that it appeared, from the long consultations held between him and the Dutch the evening before his departure, that he was going up to strengthen their cause at Moorshedabad, where the nabob must know the English had many enemies; that it was no time to stand upon the strictness of ceremony when the enemy were almost at the gates of Calcutta; and, finally, that Clive had only given orders that Cojah Wazeed should be seized on the way, but that no attempt should be made upon him if he was arrived within the district of the city of Moorshedabad.—*Warren Hastings's Letters to Clive, as given by Sir John Malcolm.*

† Account from a MS. entitled 'A Narrative of the Disputes of the Dutch in Bengal.

schemes ripe for action, they vowed vengeance if Clive persisted in obstructing the passage of their troops up the river. Clive's private interests must have been in conflict with his public duty, for he had recently remitted a great part of his fortune to Europe through the Dutch East India Company, who might have kept the money in the banks of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, both in revenge and in compensation. These considerations might have induced another man to avoid extremities, but they appear to have had no weight whatever with "The Daring in War," who was equally daring in policy. "Notwithstanding all that had passed," says the paper we have already quoted from, "on receipt of the last Dutch remonstrance we found our sentiments a good deal embarrassed, doubting whether we should stand justified to our country and employers in commencing hostilities against an ally of England, supposing they should persist in passing the batteries below with their ships and troops. In this situation we anxiously wished the next hour would bring us news of a declaration of war with Holland; which we had indeed some reason to expect by our last advices from England. Another strong reason which determined us to oppose them, and on which subject we had been guarded against by the court of directors, was, that in all likelihood the Dutch would first commence hostilities against us in India. Thus circumstanced, the Dutch themselves removed all our difficulties by beginning hostilities below, attacking with shot and seizing several of our vessels, grain-boats, &c.; tearing down our colours; disembarking our guns, military stores, &c., from our vessels to their own ships, making prisoners of the captains, officers, &c. They also began hostilities on shore in our settlements, where they tore down our colours, and burnt the houses and effects of the Company's tenants in those parts." *

It was not known whether the Dutch would come up the river and pass the English batteries with their ships and troops on board, or whether they would land the troops below the batteries, and march them thence by land; but Clive made the necessary dispositions against both these plans of operation, as far as comported with the smallness of his disposable force, consisting only of about 320 English, 1200 sepoys, and three of the Company's ships, which were all that were then in the river. Just at this juncture Colonel Forde returned to Calcutta from his career of conquest in the Northern Circars and the Deccan: he had quitted his command on account of ill-health and disgust at the conduct of the directors, who had not confirmed his appointment, and with the intention of returning to England by the first opportunity; but at the invitation of his friend and patron Clive, who entertained the highest opinion of his bravery and abilities, he readily agreed to take the command of part of the forces. On the 19th of November Forde moved from Calcutta to the northward, took the Dutch settlement at Barnagore, on the left bank of the Hooghly, crossed the river the next day with his troops and four pieces of artillery, and marched towards Chandernagore, to strike terror into the factory of Chinchura, and to be ready to intercept the Dutch troops in case they should land. The rest of his troops, and the best and largest proportion, with many volunteers draughted from the militia, and part of an independent company mounted as cavalry, Clive sent down to the forts on the river under the command of Captain Knox. Mr. Holwell, who had survived the Black Hole and the subsequent barbarity of Suraj-u-Dowlah, took charge of Fort William with the militia, consisting of about 250 English and a few Portuguese. Clive remained at Calcutta, but went and came, dividing his attention and presence between the two divisions of his army under Forde and Knox. It was noticeable that men who had been absolute cowards under Governor Drake, and the other imbeciles that presided over the defence of Calcutta at the time of Suraj-u-Dowlah's siege, were now brave, alert, and confident. The three

* "Amongst the vessels they attacked and seized was the 'Leopard Snow,' Captain Barclay, whom we had dispatched with expresses to Admiral Cornish, to hasten his coming to our succour, which we judged would meet him somewhere on the Arracan coast."

English East Indiamen which had arrived after the Dutch were lying in the lower part of the river, between that squadron and the sea; but, as the Dutch ships now began to ascend the river, these Indiamen were ordered to pass them and station themselves above the English batteries at Charnoc and Tanna, where fire-boats had been prepared to assist in destroying them. The Dutch commodore on seeing the three Indiamen coming up sent to tell Commodore Wilson that if he attempted to pass him he would fire upon him. On the 21st of November the Dutch cast anchor within range of the English cannon on the batteries; on the 23rd they landed on the Chinchura side of the river their army of 1500 men, and then dropped down with their ships to a place called "Melancholy Point"—for them appropriately so named—where the three English ships were lying ready for action.

The moment the Dutch troops were landed Clive sent Captain Knox across the river to reinforce Colonel Forde, and ordered Commodore Wilson to demand immediate restitution of our vessels, subjects, and property, and, on their refusal, to fight, sink, burn, and destroy the Dutch squadron. The next day (the 24th) the demand was made and refused. The Dutch had seven ships, four of them being called "capital ships;" the English had only three, and they appear to have derived no assistance whatever either from the land batteries, which were too far off, or from the fire-boats. Nevertheless Commodore Wilson, who began the attack, ended it in two hours with the total defeat of the enemy: the Dutch commodore, who had thirty men killed and many wounded, struck, and the rest followed the example, all except his second, who cut and ran down the river as far as Culpee, thirty-three miles in a straight line below Calcutta, when she was stopped short, intercepted, and taken by the 'Orford' and 'Royal George,' which had just arrived from England, and were ascending the Hooghly as the tide and weather permitted. The 'Duke of Dorset,' commanded by Captain Forrester, and which had more immediately engaged the Dutch commodore, suffered rather severely; but the loss sustained in the other two English ships was trifling. Apparently alarmed and stupified by the loss of their squadron, the Dutch and their Malays halted and wavered on their march to Chinchura, and on the 25th, the day after the fight on the river, they blundered upon a wretched position, from which retreat was difficult and a further advance impracticable. Forde with the quick eye of a soldier saw their blunder—saw that he had them upon the hip; but there came over him a doubt and a misgiving; and, hesitating to attack the troops of a European nation not in a state of declared war, he sent a hasty messenger across the river with a note to Clive, saying, "that if he had the order of council he could attack the Dutch, with a fair prospect of destroying them." Clive, who was playing a quiet game at cards when the note reached him, took out his pencil, and, without quitting the table, wrote on the back of it—"Dear Forde, fight them immediately. I will send you the order of council to-morrow."* Accordingly Forde fought the Dutch; and the engagement was short, bloody, and decisive. It took place in the valley of Bedarra, about four miles from Chinchura, part of the garrison of which place had contrived to join the Dutch, who were badly commanded by one Roussel, a French soldier of fortune, and who were put to a total rout in less than half an hour. The fugitives left on the field 120 Europeans and 200 Malays in killed; about 150, including M. Roussel and 14 other officers, were wounded; and about 350 Dutch and 200 Malays were taken prisoners. The total loss of the English was inconsiderable. From the field of his easy victory Forde marched to Chinchura, and, sitting down before that place, which he could have taken by a *coup de main*, he wrote to Calcutta for further orders. But the Dutch factory, in abject submission, implored for a cessation of hostilities. Deputies were appointed on both sides; the Dutch disavowed the proceedings of their squadron, humbly acknowledged themselves the aggressors, and agreed to pay costs and damages; and upon these conditions an amicable settlement was arranged, and

* Sir John Malcolm, Life.

their captured ships were all restored to them. Three days after the battle of Bedarra the nabob's son Meeran, whom Clive seldom mentioned without the affix of "scoundrel," encamped within two miles of Chinchura with about 6000 or 7000 horse. If the Dutch had proved victorious, he would have joined them in plundering and destroying the English; but, now that the English had obtained a complete triumph, he hoped to be allowed to share with them in the spoils of the Dutch. The terrified factory instantly applied to Governor Clive, entreating him to interpose, and not abandon them to the violence of the Mussulmans. Clive, losing no time, crossed the river to tell the young nabob what he might and what he might not do, and to save the factory from the chances of a black-hole, or some other atrocity. Under his dictation Meeran agreed to a treaty, and then withdrew.*

The few remaining months of Clive's present stay in India were devoted to various arrangements and precautions for securing the tranquillity of the country, and maintaining the always tottering authority of the pusillanimous nabob. When his intended departure was announced it filled Meer Jaffier, Warren Hastings, and every one else interested in the continuance of peace, with doubt and alarm; for by all these men Clive was considered as the only Atlas that could prop up the ponderous and crazy machine. The old nabob was expecting every day that the young nabob would cut his throat in private, or carve his way to the musnud through open war and revolution. Meeran had surrounded himself by all the chiefs that most hated his father or the English, having for his prime counsellor Roydullub, whom Clive described as "an aspiring, ambitious villain." Hastings, Holwell, Sykes, and Amyatt, the resident at Patna, entreated the governor to remain some time longer. "I own," wrote Hastings from Moorshedabad, "I learned with great concern that your resolution is fixed to return to Europe this season;" and he went on to predict many ill consequences likely to arise out of the departure of the only one who could alike keep the natives true to their treaties, and the English steady in the ways of justice, prudence, and moderation. But Clive on the other hand had great objects in view, which made him persist in his design: he wished by his presence and personal representations, and the influence he could now exercise by means of the great fortune and the fame he had acquired, to obtain from the British Parliament and government measures calculated to preserve what he had gained in India, and to extend and consolidate our other acquisitions in that country. He knew that a peace with France was in contemplation, and he earnestly wished to arrive before such peace should be concluded, lest our negotiators, through a want of local and other knowledge, should surrender by treaty advantages and prospects which had been obtained by arms; and besides other weighty reasons, he desired to procure for the governors of the three presidencies commissions from his majesty as major-generals, in order that this superiority of rank might put an end to the pretensions and independent powers of the king's officers, which on several occasions had seriously impeded the public service. "If," said he, "my interest prevails, I flatter myself I shall have rendered the company more service by my return to England than by my stay in Bengal. If a peace should be on the tapis, I may be of some use likewise; for convinced I am the directors are not masters sufficiently of the subject, and will probably conclude a peace in Europe which cannot possibly be abided by in the East Indies."* He had previously announced his intention and wishes to the first great Pitt, then one of the principal secretaries of state, and one of the warmest of his admirers, who, improving, as orators do, upon Major Laurence's plain dictum that Clive was born a soldier, had called him in the British House of Commons "a

* The Dutch bound themselves never to meditate war, introduce or enlist troops, or raise fortifications in the country; to keep up 125 European soldiers, and no more; to send their ships and remaining troops out of the country forthwith; and to satisfy themselves with their trade and commercial privileges. A breach of any one of these articles was to be punished with total expulsion from Bengal.

* Letter to Mr. Pigot.

heaven-born general—a man who, bred to the labour of the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the King of Prussia." To excite—what seldom required exciting—the warlike spirit and imagination of the great orator, he laid before him in this letter the immense advantages and the gorgeous empire which might be obtained in the East if the English government would only send out a thousand or two of their best troops; he remitted an exact account of the revenues of Bengal, genuine and to be depended upon, as he had got it faithfully extracted from the books of the nabob's minister; and, as the English people were prematurely complaining of the amount of the national debt, he hinted that that burthen might be got rid of by means of Indian rupees. He described in a concise and forcible manner —for since his first coming as a poor uneducated clerk to Fort St. David he had learned to write as well as fight—the disorganized, distracted state of the whole of India, the mere shadowy existence of the suzerain of all, the Great Mogul, the influence and consideration the English had obtained in the court of Delhi, and the total obscuration of the French in the Deccan. "I have great hopes," said he, "that we shall succeed in extirpating them from the province of Golconda, where they have reigned lords paramount so long, and from whence they have drawn their principal resources. Notwithstanding the extraordinary exertions made in sending out M. Lally last year, I am confident before the end of this they will be near their last gasp in the Carnatic." Having prepared his way in this and in other quarters, having called that most able officer Major Calliaud from the Carnatic to Bengal, and having paid a farewell visit to Meer Jaffier at Moorshedabad, Clive sailed from India on the 25th day of February, 1760. He had provided for the future to the extent of his means, information, or foresight, and he left brave and experienced men, trained by himself, behind him: yet, nevertheless, "it appeared as if the soul was departing from the body of the government of Bengal."

## CHAPTER IX.

### A.D. 1759. VICTORIOUS PROGRESS OF COLONEL COOTE.

CLIVE's prediction as to the result of the war in the Carnatic was justified by the fact, and by the fall of Pondicherry to English arms, an event which took place within a year after his departure. While the French army was cantoned in the country round about Wandewash, and Lally and Bussy quarrelling more violently than before, Colonel Coote with the last division of his regiment arrived on the coast, and on the 21st of November (1759) proceeded to Conjeveram, where the rest of the English troops were cantoned. As rapid as Clive, Coote fell upon the fort of Wandewash, carried it by storm on the 29th, marched to Carongoly, and took that place also by the 10th of December. Having obtained the services of a considerable body of Mahratta horse, Lally, by some artful movements, surprised and took Conjeveram, but he was disappointed in his expectation of finding there magazines and provisions for his half-famishing people. He next attempted to recover the fortress of Wandewash, where the breaches they had made were still open, and where the English had hardly any artillery. But while he or his engineer officers were formalizing as to the proper construction of the battery of assault, Coote reached the spot and compelled the French to retreat. Lally's pride, however, forbade his retreating far, and he drew up in order of battle near the walls of Wandewash. He had with him 2250 Europeans and 1300 sepoys; but, as for his Mahratta allies, they kept aloof. Coote had only 1900 Europeans, but he had 2100 sepoys, 1250 black cavalry, and 26 field-pieces.* The French were more thoroughly defeated than ever they had been up to this time. Bussy, who gallantly put himself at the head of a regiment to try a bayonet charge, was abandoned by his men and taken prisoner. Lally escaped, protected by a small body of French cavalry. He collected his shattered army at Chitteput, but he could make no stand there, and, without reinforcing the garrison in the place, he retreated still farther to the strong hill fortress of Gingee. Instead of following him, Coote resolved to strike across the country to recover Arcot, where Lally some short time before, and with much theatric pomp, had proclaimed the son of Chunda Sahib Nabob or Subahdar of the Carnatic; and the very day after the battle of Wandewash, which was fought on the 22nd of December, he hurried forward a detachment in that direction.

On the 1st of February, 1760, Coote himself arrived at Arcot, and on the 5th he began to cannonade the town from three batteries. On the 6th he commenced making approaches, and by the morning of the 9th the sap was carried to the foot of the glacis, and by the hour of noon on the same day two small breaches were made. Not three men in the garrison had been killed; the breaches were impracticable, and yet a flag of truce was held out, and Arcot was surrendered. Lally soon found it impossible to remain on the strong but barren hill of Gingee, and he retreated, with what remained of his half-naked famishing army, to the vicinity of Pondicherry. Repairing himself to that city, he quarrelled anew with the council and all the authorities there, blaming them for the destitute state of his troops, and calling them embezzlers and peculators; and they, retorting with true Gallic vehemence, accused him of folly, imbecility, treachery, and even cowardice.

* Coote's black horse, however, did no more for him than Lally's Mahrattas did for the French;—they kept out of the reach of shot, and would not even pursue when the enemy were routed.

During these unseemly altercations the French flag was struck down from nearly every place where it yet floated: Timery surrendered, Devi-Cottah was evacuated, Trinomaly surrendered, Permacoil and Alamparva were taken by storm, and the whole country between Alamparva and Pondicherry was laid waste by fire and sword. Carical, the most important place on the coast next to Pondicherry, was soon invested by an armament sent from Madras, and, by a detachment which descended from Trichinopoly; the garrison made a miserable defence, and surrendered on the 6th of April, before a relief dispatched by Lally could reach the place. The fall of Valdore, Chillambaram, and Cuddalore followed in rapid succession.

By the 1st of May the English, who had been reinforced, encamped within four miles of Pondicherry; and the French, who had received no succour from their impoverished mother country, were in a manner cooped up in that strong town, looking with a faint, declining hope for the arrival of a squadron, or some ship with some help, from the Mauritius, or Bourbon, or some other quarter. But he must be a bold and fortunate seaman that should now escape the vigilance and power of the British naval force; for Admiral Cornish had been three months on the Coromandel coast with six ships of the line, Admiral Stevens, who had succeeded Pococke, had now come forward with four more ships of the line, and was followed in a day or two by another ship of the line bringing three companies of the Royal Artillery. In his extremity Lally turned his eyes towards the country of Mysore, where Hyder Ali, who was afterwards to fill a wider scene, had established his authority by force of arms, and by force of intrigue and treachery. To bring Hyder on the back of Coote, Lally offered him present possession of the fort of Thiagur, which commanded two passes into the Carnatic, and future possession of Tinevelly and Madura—that is, when Lally and Hyder should turn the tide of war and dispossess the English of those two places. A bargain was concluded, Hyder agreeing to send droves of bullocks to feed the French, and troops to fight for the French. A detachment sent by Coote to stop the march of Hyder's people was too weak for the purpose, and sustained a defeat; but, when the Mysoreans obtained a nearer view of the English army, and a correcter notion of the real and deplorable condition of Lally's forces, they thought their bargain a bad one, and, breaking it with the ordinary Indian unscrupulousness, they marched back to their own country, troops and bullocks. Shortly before their departure six of the English company's ships arrived at Madras, and there landed a reinforcement of 600 men. More and more force continued to pour in, and still not a ship, not a man, not a barrel of beef or biscuit arrived to sustain the French in Pondicherry.

In the course of the month of October, the English fleet was raised to seventeen sail of the line, and a picturesque regiment of kilted men from the bleak highlands of Scotland were disembarked to try their mettle and their power of enduring heat in the lowlands of Hindustan. By means which are not explained, and which are difficult to understand, as the French had neither money nor credit, and as Hyder Ali had done little for them in that way, Lally succeeded in obtaining some supplies of provisions. On the night of the 4th of September he made a sortie, in the hope of surprising the English camp; but his troops no longer acted with concert or spirit; one of his divisions lagged behind, and the whole plan failed. Unfortunately the directors in Leadenhall-street had sent out by the last ships their orders that Colonel Coote should return to Bengal, and that Major Monson, the officer next under him, should take the command on the Coromandel coast. Although on the very point of completing his brilliant campaign by the reduction of the French capital in India, and although he and all men felt that the company could not know months before, when their orders were dated, what had happened, and of what honour they were depriving him, Coote, without murmur or complaint, submitted to the instructions of his employers. Nor did his magnanimity stop here—his own regiment, one of the best in India, was to proceed with him to

Calcutta; the council of Madras were thrown into consternation; Major Monson declared that if that regiment were removed he could not and would not undertake the siege of Pondicherry—and thereupon Coote most generously consented that his regiment should remain to gain laurels for another.* But the chances of war overset or postponed the execution of the directors' orders: Major Monson was dangerously wounded in an attack upon some of the outward defences of the French, and, being for the time incapable of duty, he joined the council in entreating Colonel Coote, who, luckily, had not yet sailed for Bengal, to resume the command, and Coote remained; and the siege of Pondicherry, after the cessation of the rains at the end of November, was pressed with great vigour. Several batteries played against the town from the 8th to the 30th of December; and on the 12th of January, 1761, the trenches were opened, and the place was reduced to extremity. The stores which had been procured had not been husbanded with proper care, and the provisions remaining on hand would not suffice for more than two days longer; the best part of the army, the gallant regiments of Lorraine and Lally, were reduced to a small number, and these worn out with famine, disease, and fatigue; the rest of the troops were little better than a mutinous rabble. Nothing therefore was left to the fiery, proud man who had arrived in India with the confident hope of extirpating the English and realising the grand schemes of Dupleix, but to seek conditions, and surrender. And, on the 14th of January, a commissioner from Lally and a deputation from the council of Pondicherry entered the English camp, and made an unconditional surrender to Colonel Coote.

As soon as the French flag was struck, Mr. Pigot, as governor of Madras, made a formal demand that Pondicherry should be given up to that presidency, as the conquest and property of the company. Coote and a council of war, consisting of the English admirals and the chief officers both of the army and the navy, decided that the place ought to be held for the king. Upon this, Pigot resolutely declared that, unless Pondicherry were given up to the presidency, he would stop all supplies, and furnish none of the money which was so much wanted for the subsistence of the king's troops and the French prisoners. After a reference to the company's charters, and upon other considerations, Coote and the council of officers yielded the point; and, by order of the council of Madras, immediate preparations were made for levelling the town and fortifications of Pondicherry with the ground.* The white flag of the Bourbons still floated over the hill-fort of Thiagur, fifty miles in the interior of the country—the place which Lally had promised to Hyder Ali—and over the other strong hill-fort of Gingee, about thirty-five miles north-west from Pondicherry; but the garrisons, isolated and without any hope of relief, soon surrendered; and by the beginning of April the French had not so much as a single military post in all India. M. Bussy, upon being taken prisoner at the battle of Wandewash, had been instantly liberated upon parole by Coote, who respected his abilities as a soldier and his character as a man: all the English treated him with kindness and consideration; for, unlike Lally, who had made war like a savage, he had invariably treated his English prisoners with humanity and courtesy; and when the hero of Golconda returned to France he was received, at least by the public, with the honour due to a brave and able commander, and with the interest which a military people always attach to hazardous and romantic adventures.†

* Mill.

* The instructions from the court of France to Lally had been intercepted, in which he was directed to destroy such of the British settlements as fell into his power; in consequence of which the court of directors gave orders to retaliate the same measures upon the French settlements.—*Orme.*

† When our ally and nabob of the Carnatic, Mohammed Ali, heard of the capture of Bussy, he wrote in a rapture of joy to the governor of Madras, saying that that incident alone was an advantage equal to the greatest victory that could have been obtained, and gently suggesting that he should be put into his hands, when the Frenchman would be taken good care of! Mohammed had learned nothing of the best parts of civilization, though he had been so long connected with the English; he was astonished that they did not

But far different was the fate of the miserable Lally, who was regarded with aversion and contempt by his conquerors, who left Pondicherry amidst the insults and reproaches of his own countrymen, and who, upon his arrival in France, was hooted by the people, and thrown into the Bastille by the government; and lay there till, the Bastille being considered too honourable a place of confinement for such an offender, he was removed to a common gaol. The French government of the day, borne down by a long succession of failures and defeats, were glad to avert the popular indignation from themselves by making Lally their scapegoat; and the accusations brought against that rash and violent man, not merely by his old antagonists of the council of Pondicherry, whom he had so often treated as swindlers and embezzlers, but by every Frenchman that returned beggared and desperate from India—his own glaring abuse of authority, misconduct in the field, and most indisputable failure—and the popular feeling raging against him everywhere—facilitated, and even gave a patriotic colour to, their ungenerous scheme: for, after all, unwise and bad as the conduct of Lally had been, it was difficult to prove him guilty of offences calling for more than deprivation of his military rank, contempt, and oblivion; and the abuse of authority, vexations, and exactions of which he was accused, were not capital crimes by the existing laws of France. Yet the ministry determined to prosecute him unto death, for they felt that a scene and a sacrifice was wanted, and that the enraged people and the French East India Company would not be satisfied with less than the public execution of the man who had lost all India. And thus they charged their victim with high-treason, which deprived him of the aid of counsel—they charged him with base treachery to his country and companions in arms—they charged the man whose innermost and most lasting passion was a hatred of England and of everything English, with playing into the hands of the English East India Company and its officers—they charged him, in order to crown his monstrous iniquities, with selling Pondicherry, which he had defended to the last extremity;—and the grand tribunal of the nation, the then base, truckling, and subservient parliament of Paris, allowed the trial to be conducted so as to satisfy ministers and gratify the mob. Lally had never been destitute of personal courage, and, though an old and worn-out man, his conduct throughout the protracted trial was firm and proud. He expressed the greatest indignation at most of the charges made against him; he proved some of the facts alleged to be utterly impossible; and it is said he anticipated an acquittal. When sentence of death was read to him in his foul dungeon, he threw up his hands to heaven and exclaimed, "Is this the reward of forty-five years' service!" and seizing a pair of compasses, with which he had been measuring a map of the Coromandel coast, he struck at his proud, indignant heart: but his arm was held or caught by one of the functionaries in attendance, and the blow did not penetrate deep enough to kill. He then poured forth a torrent of accusations and execrations against his accusers and judges, apparently involving many facts deemed unsuitable for the public ear. With indecent, atrocious haste they executed him that very afternoon. To prevent him from speaking to the spectators they put a large gag into his mouth before removing him from his cell. He was dragged through the streets of Paris in a dung-cart to the Place de Grève, and was there beheaded.*

In the meanwhile Clive had been received with all honour in England. The fortune he had accumulated, even without counting the jaghire conferred upon him by the nabob, amounted to 300,000*l.*, the

put their dangerous prisoner to death, and he thought them bereft of their senses when they allowed him to go at large on his parole, and received him with feasts and entertainments at Madras before his departure for Europe.

Bussy carried home, or rather remitted from the Deccan and the Circars, some time before he went home, a very considerable fortune. Shortly after his return to France, he married a niece of the Duc de Choiseul, which raised him in favour and consideration at court.

* Orme.—Col. Wilkes.—Mill.—Memoire pour le Comte de Lally.—Voltaire, Fragmens Historiques sur l'Inde et sur la Mort du Comte de Lally.

jaghire rendered from 27,000*l.*, to 30,000*l.* a-year, and he had credit for being even far richer than he really was. He was raised to the Irish peerage by the title of Baron Clive of Plassey, and was flattered by the prospect of a speedy elevation to the English peerage, which would give him a seat in the British House of Peers. For the present he took his seat in the House of Commons, where his wealth and his influence filled several other seats, and commanded votes besides his own. All parties courted him; but his admiration for Pitt increased on a personal acquaintance, and he steadily adhered to him till he was driven from office by the accession of George III. and the brief preponderance of Lord Bute. When Bute made overtures to him Clive rejected them; and when this most unpopular minister precipitated his negotiations for a peace with France he avoided consulting Clive as to the Indian clauses and conditions. The conqueror of Bengal was the more incensed at Bute's conduct in this important respect, as he knew that M. Bussy was constantly consulted by the French ministers and negotiators. The subject, however, was too near the heart of Clive to permit the indulgence of offended pride, pique, and resentment, and he transmitted a memorial to Bute, conveying ample information on all that related to our Eastern possessions. In this paper he dwelt upon the principles recommended by Dupleix, and acted upon by the French. "Dupleix," said Clive, "engaged in the contentions of the princes of the country, and had at one time, in a great measure, obtained his aim. There remained nothing to complete it but the expulsion of the English out of Hindustan. We were at that time wholly attached to mercantile ideas; but undoubted proofs of M. Dupleix's projects obliged us to draw the sword, and our successes have been so great that we have accomplished for our ourselves, and against the French, exactly everything that the French intended to accomplish for themselves and against us." He foresaw what would follow the restitution of Pondicherry and other places; he expressed a wish that the French should be limited as to the number of men they were to maintain on the Coromandel coast; and, above all things, he recommended, and strenuously urged, that under no circumstances they should ever be allowed re-admission into Bengal except as merchants. Bute graciously thanked him for this memorial; and, impatient as he was for the conclusion of peace, he abided by several of the suggestions the paper contained; and the treaty, though far indeed from satisfying Clive, was less unfavourable to the British interests in India than otherwise it might have been.* Unable to gain Clive, the Bute administration leagued themselves with Mr. Sulivan, and other directors of the East India Company, who entertained a personal animosity against Clive, and aimed at diminishing both his wealth and his reputation.

As yet neither these personal enemies nor any one else raised a breath of scandal or reproach about his conduct towards Suraj-u-Dowlah and Omichund, or against his acceptance of the treasure from Meer Jaffier after the battle of Plassey; but what Sulivan and his colleagues challenged as objectionable and criminal was Clive's acceptance of the jaghire, and his insisting on payment of those quit-rents from the company. In the opinion of the best English lawyers of the day, the grant of rent which Clive had received was valid; had been made by exactly the same authority from which the company had received their chief possessions in Bengal; the company had acquiesced in the grant for more than two years, and, in attempting to prove that Meer Jaffier had no right to confer the jaghire on Clive, they must equally prove that that nabob had no right to confer what he had conferred upon the company. It was in every respect unwise to enter upon a too nice and close examination of any of these Indian rights and titles; yet the hostile directors, in their anxiety to appropriate 30,000*l.* a-year, which they were bound to pay to the nabob before his transfer of the rent, and in their envy

* France bound herself to acknowledge the native rulers set up by the English, and never to erect any fortifications in Bengal; but on these conditions her factories and settlements were all restored to her, to be held merely as depôts and places of trade.

and hatred of Clive, who had treated some of them very superciliously, persevered in their attempt, and actually confiscated the jaghire, or, which was the same thing, they stopped payment of the rents, and put the money into their own coffers. Clive indignantly, and without an hour's delay or hesitation, filed a bill in chancery against the court of directors. The court of directors, guided by the inveterate Sulivan, endeavoured to protract the judgment of chancery by such stratagems or delays as the forms of judicial proceedings might permit; but it is said that, discouraged by the opinions given them by Mr. Yorke, the attorney-general, Sir Fletcher Norton, the solicitor-general, and other eminent lawyers, they had no hope of obtaining a decision in their favour. At the same time Clive had written to his agents at Calcutta to institute a suit at law against the company there, and to transmit a very exact account of all proceedings, that they might be taken up in England.

But while "The Daring in War" was thus involving himself in the mazes of law, and the company were battling with the man who had re-established their declining power, and gained provinces equal to kingdoms for them, news arrived that the garrison and all the English residents at Patna had been massacred, that revolutions, undertaken and made by the council at Calcutta, had proved miserable failures, and, in short, that everything in Bengal was falling into confusion and ruin. It was felt immediately, even by the most violent of his enemies, that Clive, and Clive alone, could remedy these evils, and overtures were made to him for his instant return to India. The proprietors of East India stock, who elected the directors, and who were now determined that those directors should not through pique and party commit their property and future hopes of gain, called a meeting, and at a very full general court Clive was unanimously solicited to return. At the same meeting the proprietors proposed to the directors the instant restitution of the jaghire; but Clive, who was in court, not thinking it right to take advantage of this sudden feeling, and to carry merely by his popularity a case depending at law, rose and requested they would not put this proposal to the vote; adding, however, that from a sense of the impropriety of going to India while so valuable a part of his property remained in dispute, he would make certain proposals for a compromise to the court of directors, which would, he trusted, lead to an amicable adjustment of that affair. But there was another great obstacle in the way of his departure and future usefulness; and he declared, in his decided and emphatic manner, that he would never undertake the management of affairs abroad unless Mr. Sulivan were removed at home from his influential post as chairman. He said that it would be in vain for him to exert himself as governor and commander-in-chief if his measures were to be thwarted and condemned at home, by a court of directors under the influence of a chairman whose conduct had evinced his ignorance of East India affairs, and who was also known to be his personal and inveterate enemy—that he cared not who filled the chair provided Mr. Sulivan did not, but that for the sake of his own reputation and the advantage of the company he would do nothing if that gentleman continued to have the lead in Leadenhall-street.* A violent tumult followed his speech, but Sulivan, lately so prepotent, could scarcely obtain a hearing, an overwhelming majority of the proprietors being on Clive's side, from the double conviction that he alone could save Bengal, and that he would do nothing if his will were not complied with. Sulivan wished to try the result of a ballot upon the question; but by the by-laws of the company no ballot could take place except on a requisition signed by nine proprietors; and though upwards of 300 were present, nine could not be found to sign their names to such a requisition. Clive was in consequence nominated governor and commander-in-chief of the British possessions in Bengal, with the express understanding that no other officer of whatever rank should have the power of interfering with his command there. But he still refused to enter on his office till the event of the next annual

* Clive's MSS. as cited by Sir John Malcolm.

election of directors should be known. On the 25th of April, 1764, a hot and obstinate contest took place, and ended in the triumph of Clive. Though his friend Lord Bute was no longer minister, Mr. Sulivan succeeded in bringing into the directory just half his number, but his own election as a director was only carried by one vote; and in the subsequent contest for the chair, he was completely defeated. Messrs. Rous and Boulton, two staunch friends of Clive, were nominated chairman and deputy-chairman. After these transactions the court took the subject of the jaghire into consideration, and soon agreed to the proposals which Clive himself made:—*i. e.* they confirmed his right to the full amount of the jaghire rents for ten years, if he should live so long, and provided the company should continue during that period in possession of the lands round Calcutta charged with those rents.

Clive then sailed for the third and last time to India. He reached Calcutta on the 3rd of May, 1765, and found everything in confusion and a disorganization more fearful than he had anticipated. Mr. Warren Hastings had been but too correct in his anticipation, that the folly and excesses of the Europeans would prove as mischievous as the intrigues and vices of the native great men. "Alas!" wrote Clive to a friend, "how is the English name sunk! I cannot avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation—irrecoverably lost, I fear." He called the council together and told them that he had come out to effect a thorough reform in their conduct, the source of most of the mischief which had happened; that it was his full resolution to effect a thorough reform, and, for that end, to make use of the whole of the ample authority, civil and military, which had been entrusted to him. Johnstone, one of the worst or boldest men in the council, made some show of opposition; but Clive knitted his brow and raised his voice, haughtily demanding whether he meant to question the powers of the new government, and Johnstone cowed, replied that he never had the least intention of doing such a thing: "upon which there was an appearance of very long and pale countenances, and not one of the council uttered another syllable."*

But these gentlemen of the council and the weak and incompetent governor, Mr. Vansittart, had, during Clive's five years' absence from India, done deeds fitted to make other men's faces pale and red alternately. At the period when Clive had taken his departure for England it was rumoured that the Shah Zada had collected another army and was again advancing against Patna; but it was conceived that a body of troops sent under that excellent officer Colonel Calliaud would enable Ramnarrain, the Hindu governor of Patna, to repel the invasion if really made. Ghazee-u-Deen, the vizier and master at Delhi, against whom the Shah Zada pretended in the first instance to have taken up arms, murdered the Great Mogul in a fit of desperation, and after this tragical event the Shah Zada took the state and title of emperor, and conferred the office of vizier upon Sujah-Dowlah, the powerful ruler of Oude, who had shown no great devotion to his person or fortunes the year before, when as the rebellious son of the emperor he was flying before the arms of Clive and Ramnarrain. Shah Alum—"King of the World"—was the name which the new emperor chose for himself. With the assistance of the Nabob of Oude, he soon collected a numerous army and began his march to the Caramnassa. Crossing that river he advanced to Patna, and defeated Ramnarrain, who came out of the city to meet him with a very inferior force and with only seventy Europeans and one battalion of English sepoys under the command of Lieutenant Cochrane, Col. Calliaud being at the time engaged in some important operations on the left bank of the river between Patna and Moorshedabad. In this affair Ramnarrain was wounded, and the sepoys were cut to pieces; but most of the English fought their way to the city, the enemy not daring to resist them, but opening to the right and left to let them pass. And, Colonel Calliaud having soon come up

* Clive's letter to Major Carnac, dated 6th May.

with his 300 English and 1000 sepoys, and with a native army commanded by Meeran, Shah Alum was completely routed, and compelled once more to retire from before Patna. As, however, Meeran would not pursue with his cavalry, and as a strong body of Mahratta horse joined the other side, the young emperor, instead of retiring towards Benares, took the route of Moorshedabad, being also joined at this time by the erratic M. Law and his small body of French. But being soon pursued, Shah Alum set fire to his camp, and fled towards Oude. Encouraged by the junction of the naib or sub-governor of Purneah, who after many intrigues threw off the mask and repaired to the imperial standard with a considerable army, Shah Alum, doubling upon those who were pursuing him, got back to Patna, which had been left almost without troops. Mr. Fullerton, an English surgeon, was the chief manager of the defence, and M. Law of the attack. Two assaults were repulsed by the gentlemen of the English factory in Patna; part of the wall was demolished and the rampart was scaled by the French: the French were again beaten back; but a renewed assault in greater force was expected, and hope was abandoning the bold little garrison, when Captain Knox, who had marched from Moorshedabad, in the hottest season of the Bengal year, with extraordinary rapidity, appeared in the neighbourhood, broke through the camp of the besiegers, and drove them from their works.

A few days after Knox, with 200 English, one battalion of sepoys, five field-pieces, and about 300 horse, crossed the river opposite to Patna, and completely defeated the naib of Purneah with his 12,000 men. The unlucky naib retreated with all speed towards the north, but he was soon followed by Colonel Calliaud's fresh troops and Meeran's cavalry, who crossed the Ganges, and moved on the more rapidly from the belief that he was carrying all the treasure of Purneah with him. Being overtaken, the naib put the treasure and the richer part of the baggage upon camels and elephants, skirmished for a short time to give those useful animals a start, and then ran after them, leaving his artillery and his heavy baggage to the pursuers. On the 2nd of July, the fourth day of the pursuit, a tremendous storm necessitated a halt, and at night the tent of Meeran was struck with lightning, which killed him and some of his attendants on the spot. After this evil omen Meeran's troops became unmanageable, and Calliaud was obliged to retrace his steps to Patna, where he arrived on the 29th of July. He quartered the Europeans and the sepoys in English pay in and round about that important town; but Meeran's people made the best of their way to Moorshedabad, where they surrounded the palace and threatened the life of Meer Jaffier, in order to obtain payment of their arrears. Nearly at the same time other bodies of men took up arms against the old nabob, whose coffers were empty, and whose former friends were nearly all alienated from him, partly on account of his poverty and partly because he had made several treacherous attempts against them; and the weak old man's misfortunes seemed to be completed by the predatory incursions of hordes of Mahrattas, who destroyed even more than they plundered.

On the other hand Mr. Vansittart, the new governor at Calcutta, found the treasury empty, and the English troops and sepoys almost mutinous through want of pay; and he was induced to acquiesce in all the notions and schemes of Mr. Holwell, who had come to the conclusion that Meer Jaffier, by his treachery, cruelty, weakness, and extravagance, was the cause of all these evils, and that the English, who had made him nabob, ought, not less for the good of the natives than for their own benefit, to unmake him without loss of time. And in effect on the 27th of September (1760), before Mr. Vansittart had been two months at Calcutta, a treaty was concluded with Meer Cossim Ali, son-in-law to Meer Jaffier and general of his army,* engaging that

* When the mutinous troops were threatening Meer Jaffier with instant death, his loving son-in-law Meer Cossim Ali advanced some money to pay part of their arrears and keep them quiet, but not until he had obtained from the nabob the command of the army, which Meeran had held, and the promise of the succession, which Meeran's death left open.

he should be invested with full power as nabob or ruler of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, upon condition of his making over to the company the fruitful provinces of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong. Governor Vansittart, though a mild, formal man, and one that paid homage to rules and conventionalities, went in person to Moorshedabad with the modest intention of persuading Meer Jaffier that he was unfit and unworthy to be nabob, and that he ought at once to resign his power into the hands of his more competent son-in-law. The old nabob stared with astonishment and chafed with wrath; but the quiet, peace-loving governor had brought 180 English soldiers, 600 sepoys, and four pieces of cannon to second his persuasions; his own army had declared for Meer Cossim; many of his own chiefs were seeking his life; and there was no help for him. Mr. Hastings had received orders to arrange the new government with the ministers and functionaries at Moorshedabad, and Colonel Calliaud was commanded by Vansittart to surround the palace with troops. Hereupon the helpless old man sent out the seals to his son-in-law, and offered to resign if the English would only be security for his life. This was agreed to, and a meeting took place between Calliaud and the nabob. "You English," said Meer Jaffier, "placed me on the musnud: you may depose me if you please. You have thought proper to break your engagements—I would not break mine. My son Meeran forewarned me of all this. I desire you will either send me to Sabut Jung (Clive), for he will do me justice, or let me go a pilgrimage to Mecca; or, if not, let me go to Calcutta, for I will not stay in this place. You will, I suppose, let me have my women and children; therefore let me have budgerows (boats) immediately."* Accordingly the old man, with his women and children, was conveyed to Calcutta, where alone he could be safe, and Meer Cossim Ali was proclaimed nabob, with a firing of guns and a beating of drums and tomtoms, and other ceremonials that would suit the winding up of a melo-drama in a playhouse. But Messrs. Vansittart and Holwell, and the other gentlemen of the council, who had driven on this revolution, had committed a capital mistake in assuming that the new nabob would suit their purpose better than the old one. Meer Cossim soon let them know that he had a will of his own, and that he had abilities and a kind of courage which for Bengal might be called heroic, but which was accompanied with cruelty and ferocity. At first, however, his professions of gratitude and dependence, and submission to their wills, were all that the council could wish; and having procured some money, he paid the arrears due to the English troops at Patna, and sent six or seven lacs of rupees to Calcutta.

In the month of January, 1761, Major Carnac, who had succeeded Colonel Calliaud in the command of the company's troops in Bahar, advanced from Patna against the Emperor Shah Alum, who was once more making head in that province. Meer Cossim placed some of the troops which had belonged to Meeran under the orders of Carnac, who, being also joined by Ramnarrain and his forces, gained an easy and complete victory over the Mogul. In this affair M. Law, who had been so long flitting from place to place, seated himself cross-legged on one of his guns, and in that curious attitude surrendered to Major Carnac and Captain Knox. The French, his companions, tired of the wandering life they had led with him, deserted him when the retreat began, and followed the emperor, who retired towards Delhi, and shortly after sent the new nabob Meer Cossim Ali his investiture as Subahdar or Nabob of Bengal, &c., Meer Cossim agreeing, in consideration of this acknowledgment, to pay him an annual tribute of twenty-four lacs of rupees.

At the same time Shah Alum offered the English the dewannee, or receivership, of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, if they would send an army into central India to secure him in possession of Delhi and of a throne that was tottering as it had been for generations. The project was entertained by the council at Calcutta, but they had been obliged to send

* Letter to Lord Clive from Mr. Lushington, who was linguist or interpreter to the army, and an eye-witness and ear-witness of what passed.

a great part of the money they had received from the new nabob to Madras, to enable that presidency to prosecute the siege of Pondicherry, not yet brought to a close. Meer Cossim was incessantly called upon for more money; but he had given in presents to the governor and council for his elevation upwards of 200,000*l.** In ceding to the company the countries of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, he had given away a third part of his revenues; the company's servants of all sorts, by the abuse they made of the dustucks or permits, exempting goods from the payment of duty, stopped another source of revenue; and he was soon as poor as his predecessor. Casting about him for some great prey, his greedy eye fell upon Ramnarrain, the celebrated governor of Patna, whose treasury and life had been aimed at by Meer Jaffier, but preserved and declared sacred by Clive. Mr. Vansittart, being warned of Meer Cossim's designs, at first instructed Major Carnac to afford every protection to Ramnarrain, who had received so many pledges from the English, and who had recently rendered them such valuable services in repelling the attacks of the Mogul. But it appeared to be the fate of Mr. Vansittart never to persevere in any one line of conduct, good or bad, honourable or dishonourable: he listened to the suggestions and promises of Meer Cossim, he took great offence at the free and spirited language of Major Carnac, and he sent Colonel Coote, now returned from the conquest of Pondicherry, to supersede the Major at Patna. But Coote had as high a sense of honour as Carnac, and, upon seeing what was expected from him, he refused either to be an active agent in, or a passive spectator of, the betrayal and ruin of the Hindu governor. Vansittart and the council then recalled Coote, and Ramnarrain was left to the mercy of the new nabob, who pretended that he merely meant to call him to account for the receipts of his government, and get from him arrears which neither he nor his father-in-law had ever been able to obtain. Ramnarrain was thrown into prison, his house was broken open and plundered, his friends and servants were tortured in order to make them confess where lay his hidden treasures—for the money actually found was a mole-hill instead of a mountain. The disappointed tyrant, fearing the indignation of the English, did not put his prisoner to death immediately; but two years later, when he had drawn the sword against those who had made him nabob, he murdered Ramnarrain, together with several other chiefs, both Mussulmans and Hindus.*

The immediate consequence of this base abandonment of Ramnarrain was the cessation of all friendly correspondence between the English and the native nobility, who could no longer repose confidence in the government of Calcutta. Both Hindus and Mussulmans, thinking it wiser to conciliate the new nabob than trust to the foreigners, made offers of their money and their services, and Meer Cossim, encouraged by their adhesion and by the general and increasing unpopularity of the company, flattered himself that he might soon be in a position to defy the English authority. He began by complaining and protesting against the abuses made of the dustucks or permits, by which he was deprived of his revenue, and, soon proceeding from words to deeds, he stopped goods protected by the dustucks, and he even stopped and searched boats going up the Ganges, not merely with the dustucks, but also with the company's flag. In nearly every instance he found salt, or betel, or tobacco, or some other of the articles prohibited or reserved to the nabob in the treaty; and in many instances he ascertained that the servants of the company had sold the dustucks to natives—to his own subjects, who had no right to them. Frequent acts of violence

* The following is a list of the presents acknowledged to have been received:—

| | Rupees. | £. |
|---|---|---|
| Mr. Vansittart | 500,000 | 58,333 |
| Mr. Sumner | 240,000 | 28,000 |
| Mr. Holwell | 270,000 | 30,937 |
| Mr. M'Guire | 180,000 | 20,625 |
| Mr. Smith | 134,000 | 15,354 |
| Major Yorke | 134,000 | 15,354 |
| General Calliaud | 200,000 | 22,916 |
| Mr. W. M'Guire | 75,000 | 8,750 |
| | | £200,000 |

* Vansittart's Narrative.—Reports of the Committee.—Scott, Hist. of Bengal.—Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.—Sir John Malcolm, Life of Clive

accompanied these measures, for the English, and the natives in their service or under their protection, would not easily submit to any search, and it was not in the nature of men like the officers and troops of the nabob to exercise the right of search with gentleness and moderation. To remedy these evils Mr. Vansittart negotiated a new treaty, which, while leaving some advantages to the servants of the company, made a surrender of others. But this inept governor had not the faculty of enforcing obedience on the wilful, rapacious crew at Calcutta and the other English factories, and Meer Cossim had neither the power nor the will to make the treaty be observed on his side. "In truth," says a dispassionate observer, "it soon became a personal quarrel. Meer Cossim, in the orders issued to his officers, distinguished between the trade of his friends and of those who opposed him, treating individuals with indecent reproach."* By a change made by the court of directors in the supreme council at Calcutta, Vansittart was left in a minority, and his intentions, even when they happened to be wise and good, were frequently defeated. The vacillation and infirmity of purpose that arose out of these circumstances led the nabob to despise what he and all Bengal had feared. Throwing down the pen, and writing no more letters of complaint, he called the boldest of his officers round him, seized two of the company's boats that were proceeding to Patna with arms, and made preparations for getting Patna into his own hands, and destroying the English detachment stationed there. Apprised of this latter intention, the majority of the council—it is difficult to apportion the blame—remitted orders to Mr. Ellis, the chief at Patna, to anticipate the nabob's design by seizing upon the citadel, if he should think proper or see reason to believe that the reports concerning the nabob were true. Knowing that Mr. Ellis hated the new nabob, and that he was a violent and inconsiderate man, Governor Vansittart, Mr. Warren Hastings, and Mr. Smyth had voted against giving him such discretionary power. But they were overruled by the majority; and Ellis no sooner got the order than he acted upon it by surprising and taking the citadel of Patna by night on the 24th of June, 1763.* On receiving the news of this event Meer Cossim's rage knew no bounds. Exclaiming against the treachery of the English, he murdered Mr. Amyatt, who had formerly been chief at Patna, he murdered two Hindu bankers supposed to be attached to the English interests, threw forward a great army to Patna, drove the English from the town to their factory outside of it, and from the factory to their boats. These English troops, who had behaved as disgracefully as the supreme council at Calcutta had behaved unwisely, fled up the Ganges to Chuprah, where they were surrounded, deprived of provisions, and reduced to lay down their arms. They were sent prisoners to Monghir, where they found for their companions their countrymen from Cossimbuzar, which factory had been attacked and plundered by the nabob.

In the mean time the supreme council at Calcutta had entered into new arrangements with Meer Jaffier, and had determined, as the best mode of checking the career of his son-in-law, to let him loose upon him, and set him again upon the musnud from which they had so recently pulled him down. The old nabob, passive as a nine-pin, confirmed the grants of territory made by Meer Cossim, granted an exemption to the company's servants from all search, and from all duties except upon salt, and engaged to pay to the company thirty lacs of rupees for the expenses of this new war against his son-in-

* Verelst, View of the English Government in Bengal.

* Previously to this decisive step blood had been shed in the neighbourhood of Patna. Mr. Ellis, perceiving that desertion was becoming unusually prevalent among the English sepoys at Patna, attributed the cause of it, and we presume correctly, to Meer Cossim, whose people occasionally defended the deserters by force of arms. Some of the fugitive sepoys took refuge in the fort of Monghir. Ellis sent a body of troops with orders to search the place. The nabob's officer in command refused to give admission to the party, alleging that Monghir was not only one of the nabob's fortresses, but a royal residence that could not be searched. Ellis, in a fury, ordered the English officer to hold his ground within a mile and a half of the place.—*Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Warren Hastings, by the Rev. G. R. Gleig.*

law, and to maintain at his own charge an army of 24,000 men, horse and foot. Having issued his mandates to the chiefs and to the cities of the three vast provinces, as rightful and indisputable nabob, he joined the English, who were now taking the field and advancing upon Moorshedabad. Meer Cossim sent three of his generals to meet them on their march, and an encounter took place on the 19th of July. The three native generals were completely routed; but they made head again near Geriah, whither Meer Cossim sent the greater part of his remaining troops to join them. Among these large reinforcements was a regiment of sepoys, disciplined in the European manner, and commanded by an European adventurer, whose real name is lost in his Indian designation of Sumroo, and whose real country is unknown, though he is generally called a German, and is known to have first gone to India as a sergeant in the French army.* On the 24th the English dispersed some detachments, and took possession of Moorshedabad without opposition; and on the 2nd of August they gave battle in the plain of Geriah. Their force amounted to about 750 Europeans, 1500 sepoys, and some squadrons of native cavalry. The number of Meer Cossim's army was as ten to one; it was supported by an immense train of artillery; the sepoys under Sumroo were perfectly well trained, and most of the other corps were better disciplined and appointed than any native troops the English had yet encountered. Thus the battle was maintained for nearly four hours, and some daring and almost successful movements were made under the eye of Sumroo. But at last the nabob's army was thoroughly defeated and driven off the plain, with the loss of all their cannon and of 150 boats that lay close by in the Ganges laden with provisions. They fled to an entrenched camp which Meer Cossim had formed on the Oodwa. That nabob, after executing some of the chiefs who were in the English interest, and sending his family and treasure to a strong fort, left Monghir in person with the avowed intention of throwing himself into the camp at Oodwa; but when he came near that scene of danger he halted, wavered, and turned back. Yet so strong was the position at Oodwa that it detained the English for three whole weeks. At length, however, on the 5th of September, the camp was carried after some hard fighting, and the whole army of the nabob was scattered. Murdering one or two more chiefs, Meer Cossim fled towards Patna, and was followed by such portions of his disheartened troops as still kept together. The English advanced and laid siege to Monghir, which had been carefully fortified, and which was defended by 2000 sepoys disciplined by Sumroo. After nine days of open trenches the garrison, early in October, surrendered. Meer Cossim, who had made Monghir his capital, in preference to Moorshedabad, the old residence of the nabobs or subahdars of Bengal, who had expended large sums in fortifying it, and who had entertained the hope that it could repulse the English army, was thrown into a paroxysm of rage by the news of the surrender, and his fury vented itself in ordering the execution of all the English who had been taken at Patna, with Mr. Ellis the chief. The European adventurer Sumroo undertook the execution, and directed the massacre of 150 Englishmen; every soldier and every servant of the company being brutally murdered, with the single exception of Mr. Fullerton, the surgeon. After this bloody deed Meer Cossim abandoned Patna to the care of one of his chiefs, and retreated towards the Caramnassa. The British army took Patna by storm on the 6th of November, and then continued their march to the Caramnassa, which they reached early in December, but too late to catch the flying nabob, who had crossed that river some days before, and had gone with Sumroo to seek the protection of the nabob of Oude. Soujah Dowla, the powerful ruler of Oude, and recently appointed vizier to the young emperor, was at Allahabad, and Shah Alum was with him. He had previously concluded a treaty with the ejected nabob, and, pretending to be earnest for his restoration, he marched his army to

* Sir John Malcolm says that he was told by a well-informed friend that he was not a German, but a Frenchman or Swiss, of the name of *Sombre*, which, perhaps, had been his *nom de guerre* when in the French service.

Benares, and encamped not many miles from the English. He was still accompanied by the young Mogul, who had some troops under his orders, and, as a considerable portion of the troops trained by Sumroo had followed that adventurer, the entire force collected was imposing.

At this critical moment an alarming mutiny broke out in the English camp, many of the sepoys deserted to the enemy, and whole companies of Europeans, chiefly French or Germans, and Swiss who had been formerly in the French service, marched off for Benares with their arms and accoutrements. Major Carnac, who now arrived to take the command, thought it prudent to retreat to Patna, for provisions had grown scarce and the mutinous spirit still continued. The major was soon followed by Soujah Dowla, Meer Cossim, and Shah Alum. He encamped under the walls of Patna, and was there attacked, on the 3rd of May, 1764, by an overwhelming force, foremost in which was the devil Sumroo, with the cest of the disciplined infantry. But the spirit of disaffection and mutiny had vanished at the sight of the enemy; the sepoys in English pay rivalled in bravery and steadiness the native English troops; attack after attack was repulsed: and the battle, which began at noon, was ended at sunset by the defeat and rout of the assailants, whose loss had been tremendous. Almost immediately after this reverse the nabob of Oude opened a correspondence with Meer Jaffier, the restored nabob, and offered to support him in Bengal and Orissa, if he would only cede to Oude the whole country of Bahar; and nearly at the same time the Emperor Shah Alum sent a private message to Major Carnac, offering to abandon both the nabob of Oude and Meer Cossim for English protection and alliance. These negotiations, however, came to nothing for the present, and the two nabobs and the emperor retreated together from Bahar into Oude.

In the month of May, 1764, Major Hector Monro reached Patna with a considerable reinforcement of British troops, and assumed the command of the whole army. To put a stop to the mutiny of the sepoys, whom he found clamouring for higher pay, Monro blew twenty-four of their ringleaders from the mouths of his cannon. This extreme measure was attended with complete success: there was no more mutiny from that day forward.* As soon as the rainy season drew to its close Monro led his reformed army against the enemy, and on the 22d of October, having crossed the Sona, he gave them a defeat which entirely broke the power of the nabob of Oude, the only Mogul prince that the English had to fear. One hundred and thirty pieces of artillery were left on the field by Soujah Dowla, who, cursing his allies, fled towards Lucknow. Shah Alum immediately repeated to Major Monro the overtures he had before made to Major Carnac, complaining that Soujah Dowla treated him more like a state prisoner than an emperor. Monro wrote to the presidency at Calcutta for instructions, and he was soon afterwards authorized to treat with Shah Alum, who, in the meanwhile, with such troops as adhered to him, kept close to the English army. When Monro arrived at the city of Benares, Soujah Dowla sent to offer him twenty-five lacs of rupees for the company, twenty-five lacs for his army, and eight lacs for himself, if he would consent to a peace and quit the country of Oude; but the major refused to treat unless the nabob previously delivered to the English Meer Cossim and Sumroo. Soujah Dowla, who had already quarrelled with the ex-nabob and seized the treasure he had with him, urged that he could not be guilty of a breach of the sacred laws of hospitality, but that he would undertake to induce Meer Cossim to abandon all thoughts of sovereignty and flee to a distant country, where he could give no umbrage to the company or to Meer Jaffier. As for the European Sumroo, he was not so scrupulous, proposing to invite him to a feast, and there have him murdered in the presence of any English gen-

* The twenty-four victims were selected out of a whole battalion of sepoys, who, after threatening the lives of their European officers, were marching off by night to join the enemy. They were tried by a field court-martial composed of their own black officers, who found them guilty of mutiny and desertion.

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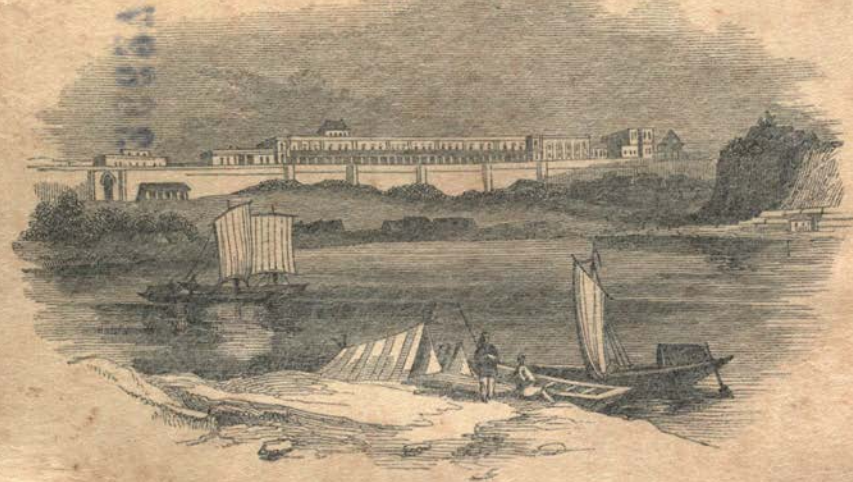


Palace of Sujah Dowla at Lucknow. From a Drawing in the British Museum.

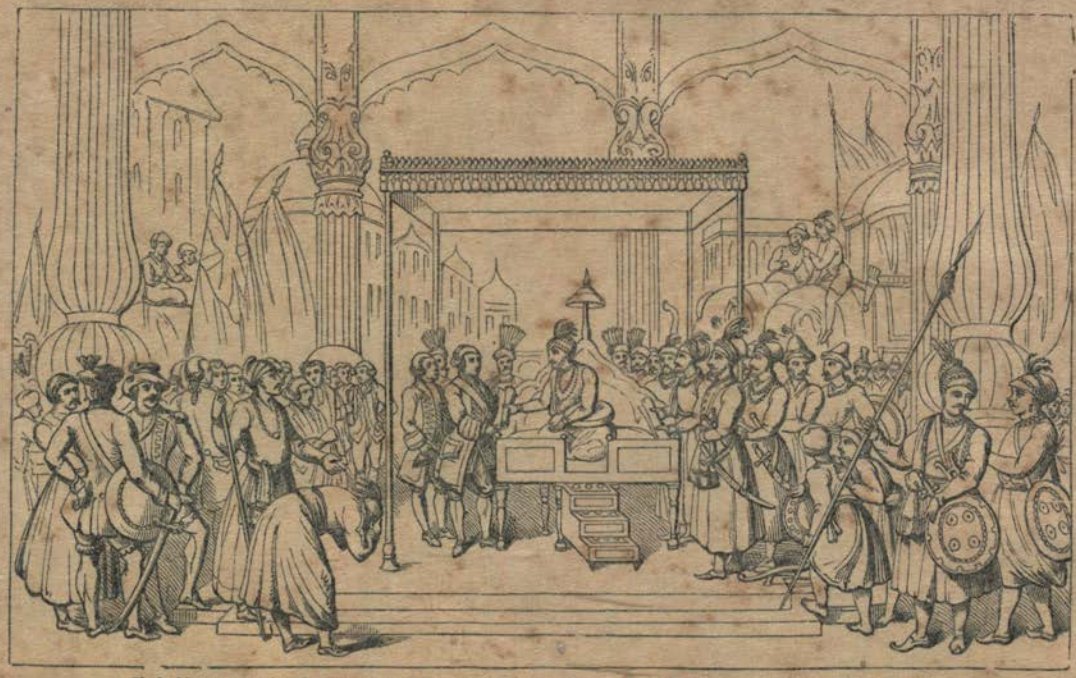
No. 8.

tleman Monro might choose to send to witness the punishment. These proposals were not relished in the English camp, and the negotiation with the nabob of Oude was broken off. The treaty with the emperor was then hurried to a close, Shah Alum, as Mogul and lord of the whole, granting to the English the country of Gazzipore, with all the rest of the territory of Bulwant Sing, the Zemindar of Benares, and the English agreeing to put Shah Alum in possession of the city of Allahabad and the remainder of the dominions of Soujah Dowla. As a last and perilous expedient, the nabob of Oude, who was thus to be deprived of all his dominions, made application to Ghazee-u-Deen, vizier and murderer of the late emperor, Shah Alum's father; and this chief of Mahratta race, being joined by Mulhar-Row-Holkar, descended into Oude with a great army of Mahratta horse. With these allies Soujah Dowla once more tried his fortune against the English, who had taken possession of Lucknow, the capital of Oude, and of Allahabad, the strongest fortress of the country. On the 3rd of May, 1765, a battle was fought near Corah, the English being again under the command of Major Carnac (now General Carnac). The Mahrattas were quickly dispersed by the English artillery, and the whole of the confederate army was broken and driven across the river Jumna.

In the mean time Meer Jaffier had again vacated the *musnud*, and this time for good, for it was death, and not the supreme council at Calcutta, that had removed him. The council had recalled him from the army to Calcutta in order to obtain money from him. Having no longer any money to give, and being harassed and fretted into a fever by importunities and menaces, he was allowed to repair to Moorshedabad, where he breathed his last in January, 1765, about four months before General Carnac's great victory. Moreover, on the very day of that victory, Clive had arrived at Calcutta with powers to set right all that had been done wrong during his absence. Before mentioning his bold proceedings in council, we may relate the conclusion of the operations in Oude; a conclusion which was not come to without his intervention. A few days after his defeat at Corah, Soujah Dowla, having announced his intention of throwing himself upon the mercy and magnanimity of the English, repaired to the camp of General Carnac, who received him with much distinction. The nabob assured the general that Meer Cossim had fled into Rohilcund, and that Sumroo had escaped to the far-off regions on the Indus. Carnac readily agreed with him that the company could not safely or profitably occupy the extensive dominions of Oude; that he was more capable of defending those territories than Shah Alum, to whom they had been promised by the recent treaty; and that in his hands they might be made a barrier against the Mahrattas and Afghans. As soon as he heard of all these events, which was almost as soon as he arrived at Calcutta, Clive set off for Allahabad to take the negotiations into his own management, and to conclude a settlement with Soujah Dowla and the emperor, with or without the aid of General Carnac.* His lordship, however, found important business to settle at Moorshedabad, where affairs had fallen into a chaos of confusion; and it was not till the end of July that he reached the English camp at Allahabad, which then contained the persons both of the Mogul of Delhi and the Nabob of Oude. The new treaty was then taken up with earnestness, the old one with the emperor—if we can call old what had been made only a few months before—being torn up as waste paper; and it was agreed that Shah Alum must rest satisfied with the possession of Allahabad, Corah, and the Douab, and that all the rest of Oude should be restored to Soujah Dowla, who was to continue vizier to the emperor, and never on any account to employ or give shelter to Meer Cossim or Sumroo. Soujah Dowla engaged to oppose the Mahrattas and defend the frontiers of Bengal, and the English bound themselves to afford him assistance in case of invasion. Shah Alum, in right of the imperial authority, which would have been nothing without the presence of the armies of the

* Mill.—Sir John Malcolm.

company, granted to the English the dewannee, or collection of the revenues, in Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, in return for which he was to receive, in addition to the revenues of Allahabad, Corah, and the Douab, twenty-six lacs of rupees per annum. Along with this dewannee —which, in fact, constituted the company masters and sovereigns of the vast and rich regions named in the grant— the young emperor confirmed the right of the company to all the territory which they possessed in any other part of India.



Shah Alum presenting the Grant of the Dewannee to Lord Clive. From the Picture painted by Benjamin West.

No. 9.

## CHAPTER X.

### MOHAMMED REZA KHAN AND NUNCOMAR.

On the death of Meer Jaffier the supreme council at Calcutta, after some deliberation, had conferred the nominal sovereignty of Bengal on his surviving son, Nujeem-ul-Dowlah, a spiritless incompetent youth, who agreed that the English should take the military defence of the country into their own hands, and appoint a naib subah, or sub-nabob, who was to manage the revenues and all other matters of government. The council appointed Mohammed Reza Khan, a Mussulman, an honest and honourable man, to this post of naib, but the new nabob was desirous that the place should be filled by Nuncomar, one of the very worst of the Hindu chiefs, who had alternately served and betrayed the English and the late nabob Meer Jaffier; and as Mohammed Reza Khan was kept in his high office, Nujeem-ul-Dowlah timidly expressed his dissatisfaction. But Clive, on his arrival, came to the conclusion that Nujeem was no more fit to be nabob than Nuncomar was to be naib, and the young man was soon compelled to retire from all business on a pension of thirty-two lacs of rupees. The dictator in India—for such Clive now was—disapproved in the strongest manner of the first revolution effected by the company in deposing Meer Jaffier, the nabob of his own making, and he considered that the violence and rashness of the majority of the council, and the excessive licence allowed to the servants of the company, and to the still more insolent and rapacious native agents of those servants, had precipitated the revolution against Meer Cossim, who, in Clive's opinion, having once been elevated to the musnud, and made to pay for that elevation, ought to have been maintained upon it, and kept in the right way by a mixture of conciliatory and restrictive measures. He had no confidence in the steadiness or good faith of any of these native chiefs or princes; but he conceived that it was possible to manage them, and monstrous in the English to be always making and breaking bargains with them, and keeping the country in a continual state of uncertainty, revolution, and change. Before his departure from England he assured the Court of Directors that the English, by this kind of conduct, had lost all the confidence of the natives. "To restore this," he added, "ought to be our principal object; and the best means will, in my opinion, be by establishing a moderation in the advantages which may be reserved for the company, or allotted to individuals in their service. . . . During Mr. Vansittart's government all your servants thought themselves entitled to take large shares in the monopolies of salt, betel, and tobacco (reserved by treaty to the nabob), the three articles, next to grain, of greatest consumption in this empire. The odium of seeing such monopolies in the hands of foreigners need not be insisted on; but this is not the only inconvenience; it is productive of another, equally, if not more prejudicial to the company's interests; it enables many of your servants to obtain, very suddenly, fortunes greater than those which in former times were thought a sufficient reward for a long continuance in your service. Hence these gentlemen, thus suddenly enriched, think of nothing but of returning to enjoy their fortunes in England, and leave your affairs in the hands of young men, whose sanguine expectations are inflamed by the examples of those who have just left them." These servants of the company looked to the India House as a kind of lottery-office, and their impatience was disappointed if they were not enabled to make a fortune

in two or three years. With the most exaggerated notions of the resources of Bengal, they seem to have considered all means as fair and justifiable that tended to turn the stream of gold into their own pockets. We believe that there is no exaggeration in the eloquent warmth of the following passage:—"The immense population of his (the nabob's) dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign, and who could unmake him. The servants of the company obtained—not for their employers, but for themselves—a monopoly of almost the whole internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and sell cheap. They insulted with perfect impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependents, who ranged through the provinces spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master, and his master was armed with all the power of the company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the last extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the company thicker than the loins of Suraj-u-Dowlah. Under their old masters they had at least one resource: when the evil became insupportable they rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization. It resembled the government of evil genii, rather than the government of human tyrants. Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of the English breed—the hereditary nobility of mankind—whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man, as their fathers had been used to fly from the Mahratta; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages and towns, which the report of his approach had made desolate."* Clive had come out to put an end to this state of things; but the task he had undertaken was not an easy one. Most of the members of the council had been partakers in the spoils and profits of the system; many of the servants who had been most oppressive and rapacious were strong in their patronage at Leadenhall-street—were brothers, sons, cousins, nephews, or otherwise near connections of great shareholders and potent directors. Moreover, nearly every European in the country looked to India as an estate in *usu fructu*, which they were to make the most of for themselves, without caring for those that might come after them, and without any regard to the lasting advantages of the company or of the mother country.

It has been well said that this was a battle harder than that of Plassey, the whole settlement being set as one man against Clive and his proposed reforms. At first the more powerful of the ravenous wolves threatened and protested, and quoted Clive's large fortune as a justification of their own. Several, confident in their patronage at home, refused to act with or under him; upon which he declared that, if he could not find support at Calcutta, he would procure it elsewhere; and he actually sent for some civil servants from Madras, and turned the refractory out of their offices. Then recourse was had to the gentler ways of flattery and entreaty, arguments, persuasions, and prayers; but they would have been as hopefully and as profitably employed in bidding the monsoons to forget to blow at their fixed seasons, or in commanding the Ganges to roll back its waters from its many mouths on the ocean to its sources among the eternal snows of the Himalaya mountains. Nothing could turn Clive from his purpose. He put down the private trade and dangerous privileges of the company's servants; and he rigidly prohibited the extorting or receiving presents from the natives. But he also adopted measures which might give the servants of the company a proper maintenance and

* T. Macaulay, Edin. Rev.

a fair chance of acquiring fortunes by application and perseverance. Hitherto the pay of these servants was miserably low—so low, indeed, that the salary of a member of the council of Calcutta was only 300*l.* a-year. "Yet it was notorious," says the eloquent writer we have just quoted, "that such a functionary could hardly live in India for less than ten times that sum; and it could not be expected that he would be content to live even handsomely in India without laying up something against the time of his return to England. This system, before the conquest of Bengal, might affect the amount of the dividends payable to the proprietors, but could do little harm in any other way. But the company was now a ruling body. Its servants might still be called factors, junior merchants, senior merchants;—but they were, in truth, proconsuls, proprætors, procurators of extensive regions. They had immense power. Their regular pay was universally admitted to be insufficient. They were, by the ancient usage of the service, and by the implied permission of their employers, warranted in enriching themselves by indirect means; and this had been the origin of the frightful oppression and corruption which had desolated Bengal. Clive saw clearly that it was absurd to give men power, and to expect that they would be content to live in penury. He justly concluded that no reform could be effectual which should not be coupled with a plan for liberally remunerating the civil servants of the company." The directors, he knew, would not sanction any increase of salaries out of their own treasury, and he had to look only to some disposable revenue on the spot. The monopoly of salt, which had been for ages a principal head of Indian revenue, and which was now, by the last arrangements, pensioning off the young nabob, in the hands of the company, seemed to him the readiest and best source; and he accordingly appropriated it to the proper pay and support of the servants of all kinds, carefully dividing the proceeds according to a scale. His conduct in this particular was misrepresented at the time, and was afterwards placed foremost in the list of his offences—a list drawn up by implacable men, who, for very obvious reasons, would have passed over without censure or comment several of his deeds that were most open to obloquy. The measure, however, has been defended as wise and just by many recent writers, and by none more earnestly than by Mr. T. Macaulay. "The monopoly of salt," says that gentleman, "had been a source of revenue to the governments of India before Clive was born; it continued to be so long after his death. The civil servants were clearly entitled to a maintenance out of the revenue, and all that Clive did was to charge a particular portion of the revenue with their maintenance. He thus, while he put an end to the practices by which gigantic fortunes had been rapidly accumulated, gave to every British functionary employed in the East the means of slowly but surely acquiring a competence."* But, after settling with the civil servants, Clive had to struggle with the bolder men who held the power of the sword; and to encounter—what is always difficult to bear—the ill will and reproaches of old companions in arms. The directors had ordered him to make sundry retrenchments; and Clive himself felt the necessity of doing away with or limiting the practice of giving additional pay, or, as it was called, "double batta"—a practice first introduced after the battle of Plassey by the nabob Meer Jaffier, who, according to treaty, was to pay the expenses of the war. Clive at that time warned the army that this "double batta" was to be considered as an extraordinary indulgence on the part of the nabob, and not as a regular emolument to be paid by the company every time they took the field. Since then the court of directors had issued the most positive orders that "double batta" should be abolished; but Vansittart and his council had listened to the remonstrances of the army, and had not ventured to carry these orders into execution.

On the 1st of January, 1766, Clive and the select committee issued an order that

* "Seventy years ago," says this writer, in another part of the same brilliant article, "*much less money was brought home from the East than in our time;* but it was divided among a very much smaller number of persons."

"double batta" to the European officers—the only class that now claimed it—should cease, except at Allahabad, where the troops were considered as being actually in the field; and generally the troops in Bengal were put upon the same footing as the troops on the Coromandel coast, by whom no "batta" was drawn, except when actually marching or serving in the field. The officers remonstrated: Clive quoted to them the positive and peremptory orders of the company; and on the appointed day the reduction took place. Forthwith two hundred English officers, who had expected the blow some time before, engaged in a confederacy or conspiracy, binding themselves by an oath to secrecy, and to preserve, at the hazard of their own lives, the life of any comrade that might be condemned by a court-martial. Thinking that they should thereby evade the charge of mutiny, they refused their usual pay. Each officer confederating bound himself in a bond of 500*l.* to throw up his commission, and never accept it again unless "double batta" were restored. On the day appointed all these officers, who are said to have been supported and encouraged underhand by several of the civilians at Calcutta, resigned, apparently in full confidence that Clive would be frightened out of his resolution, as at that very moment the country was threatened with a new invasion by a Mahratta army. But they mistook the force of Clive's character. Stern and unmoved, he wrote to the council:—"Such a spirit must, at all hazards, be suppressed at the birth;" and he desired them to write to Madras, in order that every officer and cadet that could be spared from that presidency should be held in readiness to embark for Bengal at the shortest notice. Further, he desired them to acquaint the presidency of Fort St. George with the mutiny and with the approach of the Mahrattas; and he concluded by stating that the committee at Calcutta must adopt the absolute determination that no officer now resigning should ever again hold any place or station in the company's service. He had still a few officers near his person on whom he could rely, and, having very good reason to know that a young writer or clerk might soon be turned into a good soldier, he gave commissions to several young men in the mercantile service. When informed by one of his colonels commanding at Monghir that the sum of 16,000*l.* was said to be subscribed for the mutinous officers by gentlemen at Calcutta in the civil service, he requested the council to take immediate steps for discovering and punishing the civilians who were thus encouraging the most dangerous of mutinies; and he sent orders to Monghir to arrest a number of the officers till a court-martial of field-officers could be summoned. "The ringleaders of this affair," said he, "must suffer the severest punishment that military law can inflict, else there is an end of discipline in the army, and of authority in the East India Company." He was well backed by General Carnac, Colonel Smith, Sir Robert Barker, Mr. Robertson, the field-adjutant, and other superior officers; he knew that the common English soldiers were steady, and that the sepoys would stand by him in any extremity. Having sent forward such trustworthy officers as he had been able to collect at a short notice, he quitted Moorshedabad, where he had been arranging matters of trade and finance, and advanced fearlessly and with a small escort to Monghir, declaring that he must see the soldiers' bayonets levelled at his throat before he could give way an inch.

In the mean time the council had resolved that all resignations tendered should be accepted, and the officers tendering them immediately sent down to Calcutta.* The officers who had been sent forward, on their arrival at Monghir, told those who were in the confederacy that Clive was coming, determined not to yield to them, reminded them of their ingratitude towards a person who had recently given up 70,000*l.* to form a fund for their invalids and widows, and made use of other arguments likely to lead them back to a sense of their duty; but

* "On applying to the free merchants," says Sir John Malcolm, "to come forward and do duty as officers on the present emergency, two only would accept commissions, which confirmed the suspicion that the greater part of them approved the conduct of the officers, even if they had not entered into a subscription to support the combination."

Monghir—View within the Fort. From a Print by Salt.

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their answer was that they had gone too far to retract.* Immediately on his own arrival Clive addressed the soldiers, explaining the crime of their officers, mentioned his own donation to the European part of the army, and ordered double pay to be issued to the sepoys for two months —regretting that he should be obliged to place that confidence in the black troops which he had, before the recent conduct of their officers, reposed in the English. To the sepoys he committed the care of escorting a number of the conspirators to Fort William. In a short time the ringleaders were all arrested, tried, and cashiered; but, as some legal doubts were entertained as to the powers granted by the Mutiny Act for the company's service, not one of them was sentenced to death, though Clive, in the first heat of his passion, had threatened to have them all shot. Repentance and humiliation—expressed in many instances to Clive even with tears—now became general; nearly all who had resigned begged to be permitted to withdraw their resignations: the objects of their combination were defeated, — their dangerous league was broken,—and those who were restored were compelled to sign a contract to serve the company on its own terms for three years, and to give a year's notice of any intention to quit the service. Clive treated the younger offenders with lenity; and, when his indignation was cooled and the danger over, he scorned to take any personal vengeance for personal wrongs and insults. When told that one of the conspirators had planned his assassination, he stopped the charge by saying —"No, the officers are Englishmen, not assassins." He forthwith adopted several wise regulations to restore the strictest discipline and subordination, and to check that luxury and extravagance, that gambling and dissipation, which had been the main cause of the late troubles. In the course of a very few weeks he could announce that everything was as quiet and as well regulated as could be wished.

Clive, satisfied with the large fortune he had previously made, had voluntarily declared on accepting his reforming mission that he renounced all claim to the commercial or other advantages then attached to the post of governor—that he wanted no more money—that he wanted nothing but a thorough reform, which in the end would prove equally beneficial to the oppressors and to the oppressed—to the poor natives, to the servants of the company of all classes, to the company itself, and to the British nation. It is not often—perhaps a similar case never occurred—that a man has so scrupulously adhered to such a resolution under such temptations: the servants of the company would have enabled him to double or treble his fortune if he had consented to connive at their misdoings; the neighbouring princes of India would have paid any price for his assistance; the ruler of Benares offered him diamonds of inestimable value; Soujah Dowla, the vizier and nabob of Oude, offered him a large sum of money and a casket of jewels; but these and other temptations he firmly resisted, making no merit of his refusals, which did not come to light till after his death. He always affirmed that this his last administration diminished instead of increasing his fortune.*

The power of the English in Bengal, hitherto undefined and in constant and inevitable collision with that of the nabob, was fixed, and became, in fact, a real and sole sovereignty, by the bargains he had concluded with Shah Alum and the son and successor of Meer Jaffier. Clive, however, thought that the name of a nabob might still be of some use, particularly in dealings with the other European nations, like the Dutch and Danes, who retained their possessions in Bengal, and the French, who had obtained repossession of theirs, though bound not to fortify them, by the recent treaty of peace. But the phantom he left at Moorshedabad, surrounded by guards and silver maces, was,

* A legacy of 70,000*l.* was bequeathed by Meer Jaffier to Clive, who paid it into the company's treasury at Fort William, to lie at interest for the support of European officers and soldiers who might be disabled or decayed in the company's service in Bengal, and for the widows of officers and soldiers who might die on service there. The company afterwards extended this provision; and the fund, which still bears the name of Clive, owes its origin to this his princely donation.

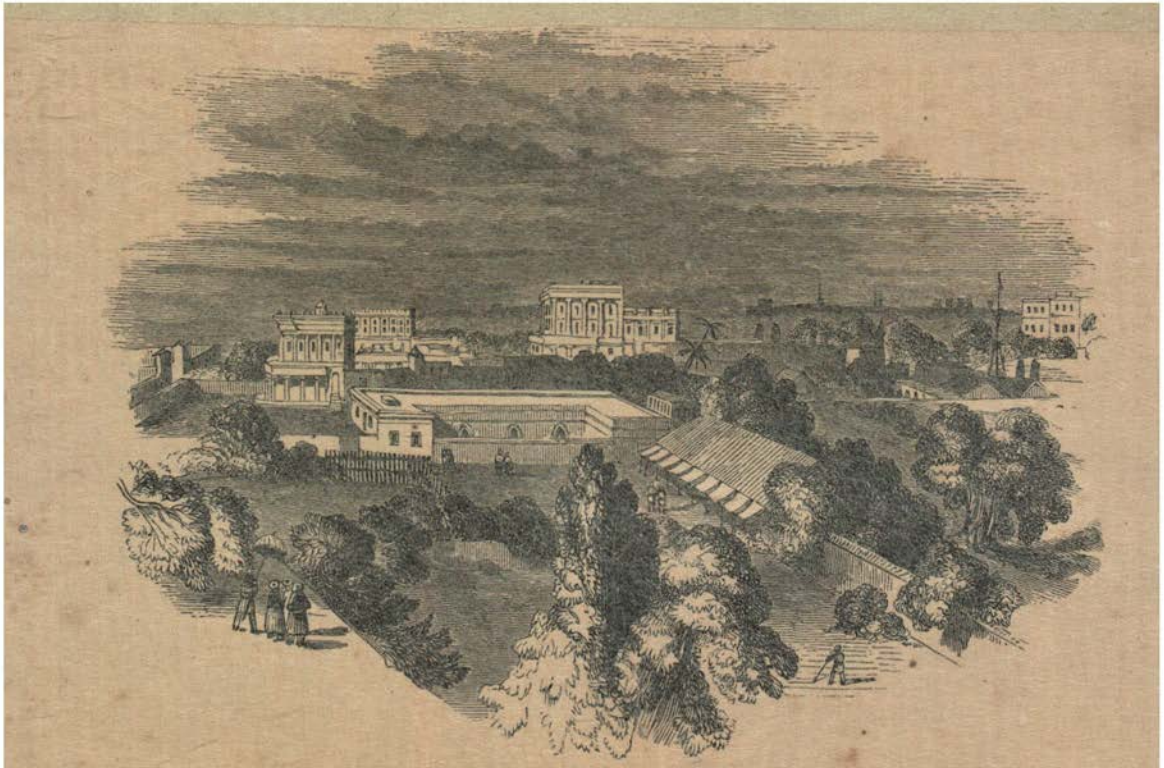
* Sir John Malcolm, Life.—Edin. Rev.

in fact, a mere pensioner of the company, alike incapable of doing either good or evil in the political affairs of the country. Having, as he considered, done all that he had come to do, Clive was anxious to return home, for his health was again seriously affected. The company, it appears, tempted him to remain a year longer, by offering to make his jaghire perpetual; but he said that he saw no necessity for staying; that he could render the company more essential service at home; and that he was not to be tempted even by the bait of the jaghire. In fact, the nervous malady to which he had been a prey from time to time ever since his youth was now accompanied by the bodily and mental horrors that arise from bile and a diseased liver; and he was occasionally attacked by spasms which thus early endangered his life or his reason. These attacks could not break the iron energy of his will, or put a stop to his labours so long as there were important objects to pursue; but that incessant toil, turmoil, and excitement wore out the weakly body.* On the 16th of January, 1767, he attended for the last time a meeting of the select committee at Calcutta. In his farewell address he told them that he could now leave the country in peace and in a flourishing state; but he strongly advised them not to be over anxious to increase the revenues, especially where increase could only be effected by oppressing the native landholders and tenants. He candidly expressed his great apprehension that their empire in the East might still be exposed to danger by the revival of rapacity, corruption, and insubordination, which he had put down with so much difficulty. He read them a good lesson on the necessity of reflecting well on their orders before they issued them, and of permitting no obstacle to their execution when once issued. He strongly recommended a most delicate regard to the trade, the property, and general well-being of the people of the country. In ending, he said—"I leave the country in peace: I leave the civil and military departments under discipline and subordination: it is incumbent upon you to keep them so."* A few days after—at the end of January, 1767—he took his final farewell of India, embarking for England in the "Britannia." He arrived at London in the month of July, was hailed with acclamations by the court of directors, was received with unusual regard by George III. and Queen Charlotte, to whom he brought letters and presents from the Nabob of Oude,† and was then carried by his family and friends to Bath, to seek a cure or an alleviation to some of the worst ills that flesh is heir to—spasms, indigestion, loss of sleep, and hypochondriasis. The next time we shall meet Lord Clive will be as a criminal put upon his defence—as the most unpopular or the most abused man in the three kingdoms.

* On the 30th of December, 1766, he wrote to a friend in England—"The court of directors have been very strenuous in soliciting me to continue another year in India. They have loaded me with compliments, and given me as much additional power as I could have wished. But the situation of the company's affairs does not require that I should sacrifice another year in this climate; and, even if it did call upon me to make such a sacrifice, it would be vain. The very severe attack of bile that I have been struggling with for many weeks puts it beyond a doubt that I could not survive and be of use to the company in India another year."

* Sir John Malcolm, Political Hist. of India.—On the 23rd of January he wrote an earnest letter to the select committee, with other rules or recommendations for their conduct. In this letter he said, "The people of this country have little or no idea of a divided power; they imagine all authority is vested in one man. The governor of Bengal should always be looked upon by them in this light, as far as is consistent with the honour of the committee and council. In every vacant season, therefore, I think it expedient that he take a tour up the country in the quality of a supervisor-general. Frauds and oppressions of every sort, being by this means laid open to his view, will, in a great measure, be prevented, and the natives preserve a just opinion of the importance and dignity of your president, upon whose character and conduct much of the prosperity of the company's affairs in Bengal must depend."

† In the chronicle of the Annual Register for the year 1767 the following entry occurs:—"July 20th. We hear that Lord Clive has brought over and presented to his majesty a fine sword set with diamonds, and a fine pearl necklace for her majesty; both of very considerable value. He has likewise brought a fine diamond, as a present from the nabob to his majesty, of *immense* value, and many curiosities of that country." We need scarcely mention the malicious inferences which were drawn from these presents.



View of Calcutta. From a Print after Daniell.

No. 11.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE RAPID RISE OF HYDER ALI.

In the course of the year 1767 the Afghans created some alarm in Bengal by marching upon Delhi; but after devastating several provinces, the invaders returned to their mountains. The presidency made a feeble attempt to restore the Rajah of Nepaul to his dominions, which had been seized by a neighbouring chief of Ghurka. The country of Nepaul, almost surrounded by mountains, was found too difficult of access by the small force sent against it; and the officer in command of the expedition thought proper to return, after a vain application for reinforcements, which the government at Calcutta could not spare, as they had been obliged to send several large detachments to the Carnatic, where the flames of war were rekindled by Hyder Ali.

This great adventurer, who became one of the most formidable of our opponents in India, had, since his expedition to the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, as the ally of M. Lally, greatly increased his army, which was originally formed out of the freebooting bands and tribes that abounded in Western India, and that sought no other reward than the right and privilege of plunder. Instead of paying them, Hyder, in a manner, received pay from them—for, in enrolling under his banner, they engaged to give him half of the booty they might make. By degrees he acquired more horses, camels, and elephants, more money, and the command of more men than his benefactor and nominal master, the Rajah of Mysore; and he accordingly made war upon the rajah, whose court and army had the usual number of disaffected chiefs and traitors, defeated him, took him prisoner, and, as a climax to his gratitude, kept possession of all his dominions, and pensioned him off with three lacs of rupees per annum. At the end of the year 1761 Hyder's authority seemed firmly established in Mysore. But his own disposition and the habits of the marauders in his service led him to look to an extension of dominion, or to the plunder of the neighbouring states; and the success which attended his banner, and the high notions entertained of his ability and lucky star, attracted others of the loose tribes that owned no sovereign, and no law or right save that of the sword. His abilities were undoubted—they were altogether surprising, considering the circumstances of his life, and his total want of education—and they improved by practice, age, and experience. Still, however, he remained a barbarian, and the plaudits bestowed upon him by many European writers are exaggerated and absurd. That such a man could ever have extended his sway over the greater part of India, or, at least, that he could ever have rendered that sway durable, appears to us a most fantastic dream; and that a character stained by the darkest treachery, ingratitude, and cruelty should have found admirers in historians pedantically moral and severe in their estimates of other actors in these wars and revolutions, must be attributable to a love of paradox and contradiction, or to the predetermined plan of praising all that prevented, and blaming all that promoted, the establishment of the British empire in India—that great result, not unattended with faults and crimes, which no conquest ever yet was, but admirable in its general operation, as conferring more happiness upon many millions of people than they ever had enjoyed, or could ever hope to enjoy, under their native Mohammedan or Hindu rulers.

The raiahs and polygars of Sera, Bala-

poor, Gooty, Harponelly, Chitteldroog, and other districts, who had set the power of his predecessor on the throne of Mysore at defiance, were presently reduced to submission by Hyder Ali. Then, pretending to take up the cause of a young impostor, a sort of Indian Perkin Warbeck, he marched to the conquest of Bednore, and kept that rich and prosperous country for himself. The booty he made was immense, for Bednore, situated among lofty mountains, had for a long time escaped the visitations of war. This conquest allured him on to others, and furnished him with the means of prosecuting them. Soonda, on the northern frontier of Bednore, was overrun, nor did he cease until he had extended his dominion almost to the banks of the Kistna. But here his career was checked by Madhoo Row, the Peishwa of the Mahrattas, who crossed the Kistna with an immense army, all of horse, defeated him in many encounters, deprived him of some of his recent acquisitions of territory, and compelled him to pay thirty-two lacs of rupees.* Notwithstanding these serious checks, he soon undertook and achieved the conquest of the provinces of Malabar, and kept that country quiet by cutting off all the nairs or Hindu chiefs. Soon, however, he was recalled to the city of Seringapatam, which he had made his capital, and had already strongly fortified, by intelligence that a league had been formed against him by the English, the Mahrattas, and the ruler of the Deccan. The Deccan was no longer in the hands of Salibut Jung, the old ally of M. Bussy, and then of Colonel Forde. Fresh revolutions had been effected at Golconda and Hyderabad; Salibut Jung had been made a prisoner by his brother, Nizam Ali, who occupied his throne, and respected his life until the arrival of the treaty of Paris, which recognised and acknowledged Salibut as lawful sovereign, and which induced Nizam Ali to order his immediate murder. At first the new Subahdar, or, as he is more generally called by our writers, the Nizam, seemed unfavourable to the English, and he actually had invaded the Carnatic, and made war upon Mohammed Ali in the most barbarous and destructive manner: but he had fled before Colonel Campbell and a small British force, and since then he had concluded a treaty with the company, confirming to them the conquests which Colonel Forde had made in the Northern Circars, on condition of their paying a small tribute or quit-rent, and holding in readiness a body of their troops for his service, whenever he might want such aid. By this latter engagement, and by their conviction that it was necessary for their own safety to stop the career of Hyder Ali, the English were carried into the confederacy with the Nizam and the Mahrattas, and into the war with Mysore.

The first of the confederates to take the field was the Peishwa, who covered the high table-lands of Mysore with his Mahratta cavalry. Colonel Smith, after a visit to Hyderabad, followed with a small English corps, and the large but disorderly army of the nabob of the Carnatic. He was joined by another large force, raised by the Nizam of the Deccan, but before he could arrive near the Mahrattas the Peishwa had listened to a Brahmin, dispatched to him by Hyder Ali, and had consented, on the payment of thirty-five lacs of rupees, to quit the country, and break all his engagements with the Nizam and the English. This defection rendered success doubtful, and Colonel Smith was soon obliged to think of his own safety by the important discovery he made, that the Nizam himself was privately negotiating a treaty with Hyder, the main scope of it being the expulsion of the company from the Carnatic, from the Circars, and from every place they held on the Coromandel coast. Colonel Smith instantly separated from the Nizam's army, and hastened to defend the Carnatic by taking possession of the ghauts or passes leading through the mountains into that country. He received some reinforcements from Mohammed Ali, the Nabob of the Carnatic, but he could not secure all the passes against three numerous armies, and his rear was soon threatened by the rapid

* Colonel Wilks, Historical Sketches of the South of India; and Hist. of War in Mysore.

Mahratta cavalry. Smith retreated for Changama, a town about sixty miles from Madras, but before he could reach that place he was attacked by the three armies of Hyder Ali, the Peishwa, and the Nizam. His well-disciplined infantry stood their ground, and repulsed their countless assailants; but the marauding Mahrattas got at their rice-bags, and carried them off, and, to avoid starving, Smith's forces were obliged to continue their retreat, and to march day and night until they reached Trinomalee, a town strongly situated on a hill, and well supplied with provisions. Plundering, burning, and destroying all the open country, the enemy followed closely upon the steps of Colonel Smith, who, receiving reinforcements of sepoys, did not long remain inactive at Trinomalee, but, issuing into the open country, he endeavoured to save it from the scourges and firebrands. His efforts were not very successful, as he had scarcely any cavalry. Seizing a favourable moment, Hyder Ali detached his son Tippoo, then a youth of seventeen, to beat up the neighbourhood of Madras with 5000 horse. Tippoo's advance was so secret and rapid that he nearly succeeded in seizing the members of the presidency, and the chief and richest of the English in their country houses without the town. The fortress of Madras itself, which had repulsed Lally and a French army with battering cannon, had little to fear from Mysorean cavalry; but the town, the black town, the magazines or warehouses, villas, gardens, villages, all things in its vicinity, were ransacked or destroyed, the country was laid as waste and bare as a desert, and an immense loss was sustained by the English and the poor natives, their tenants or dependants. Tippoo retired as fast as he had come, and with considerable booty; but his father and his allies were not left long unmolested, being attacked and routed by Colonel Smith near Trinomalee. The Nizam of the Deccan, who was the first to recommend this pitched battle with the English, was also the first to flee. By this time he had had enough of the war and of his new alliance, and he lost no time in signifying to Colonel Smith that he was exceedingly anxious to be restored to peace and to the friendship of the English. After very little negotiation the Nizam agreed to separate his troops from the Mahrattas and the Mysoreans, leaving the Peishwa and Hyder Ali to shift for themselves. Bolder and more persevering than he, Hyder and the Mahrattas resolved to try the chances of another pitched battle; and in the month of December they took the field, and posted themselves near Amboor, a town in the Carnatic, about 108 miles from Madras. Colonel Smith met them there and gave them another defeat, more decisive and complete than the preceding one. Hyder and his ally fled to Caverypatam, on the river Panaur, and the Nizam, who had waited the event of the battle before he entirely forsook the confederacy, drew off all his troops and concluded his separate treaty with the English, for which he was the more impatient from his fear that, during his absence from the Deccan, another loving brother might do by him as he had done by Salibut Jung. By this new compact, signed on the 23rd of February (1768), the company recognised the titles and rights of the Subahdar or Nizam, and agreed to assist him whenever required with two battalions of sepoys, and six pieces of artillery properly served, the Nizam agreeing, on his side, to re-confirm the possession of the Northern Circars to the company, and to reduce the tribute for those territories from nine lacs per annum in perpetuity to seven lacs per annum for the space of six years only; and also to grant the dewannee of Balaghaut, a country in the possession of Hyder, to the English, subject to a payment of seven lacs of rupees per annum to himself, and to the payment of chout* to the Mahrattas.

Encouraged by their successes, by the departure of the Peishwa with most of his troops, and by the despondency of Hyder, the presidency at Madras determined to carry the war into the very heart of his own dominions; and Colonel Smith, who had displayed so much bravery, rapidity, and skill, received orders to march into

* A tribute, commonly consisting of a fourth part of the revenues.

Mysore. Unfortunately, the civilians took it into their heads that they could direct the campaign from their sofas and easy chairs at Madras, and, instead of leaving the plan and conduct of the war to Colonel Smith, they prescribed rules for him to follow. Smith, apparently in no very good humour, informed them that in the barren territory around Bangalore, to which they ordered him to advance, he could not possibly subsist his army; and that the better mode of proceeding would be to occupy in the first instance the fertile country, not in the interior, but on the frontiers of Mysore. The president and council, obstinate in their new functions, would not give up their own plan, but, to pay some deference to the opinion of the soldier, they resolved to adopt his plan also, and they sent Smith orders to march upon Bangalore, and Colonel Wood, who was to be detached from Smith's force, orders to confine himself to operations on the frontiers. This union of two plans was worse than their first bad one, as it divided an army already of the smallest for such an enterprise; and, to make matters worse still, they sent to the army two members of council as field-deputies, who were to act in concert with the presidency, and keep the war entirely under their control. Functionaries like these are sure to ruin what they meddle with. The presence and interference of the two civilians disgusted alike officers and men, and from the moment of their arrival in camp the spirit of the army seemed to evaporate.* To favour its operations the presidency of Bombay sent a force to the western coast to fall upon Hyder's recent conquests in Malabar and Canara. This force, favoured by the Hindu natives, captured Mangalore, Onore, and other places, and drew Hyder down to the western coast. This enabled Colonel Smith to arrive in the neighbourhood of Bangalore, and Colonel Wood to overrun the fertile country near the frontiers. But Hyder, having succeeded in the west in expelling the Bombay English force, returned rapidly to the east to face them there. He made overtures for a peace, but they were rejected by the two field-deputies. At this juncture the presidency, moreover, dissatisfied with Colonel Smith because he treated the deputies or their opinions in war with little respect, and because he had not taken the strong city of Bangalore, recalled that able officer to Madras, and intrusted the entire command—always, however, subject to the benumbing influence of their deputies—to Colonel Wood, who, in a very short time, was compelled to call in all the advanced forces, to abandon every place which had been taken, and to retreat before Hyder Ali. He even allowed himself to be surprised, beaten, and deprived of all his baggage. The presidency then discovered that Wood was not the man to conquer Mysore, and they superseded him by Major Fitzgerald, who arrived just in time to save the flying and confused army from annihilation. Wood was put under arrest, and sent down to Madras. By the end of the year Hyder recovered every inch of territory he had lost; and in the month of January, 1769, carefully avoiding a battle, and marching rapidly by some of the less frequented ghauts or passes, he poured down again into the Carnatic, laid waste the English provinces of Madura and Tinevelly, and penetrated into the district of Pondicherry, where the French flag was again flying, and where there were many Frenchmen indulging in the hope that time and fortune might restore their power in that part of India.

As the most dangerous enemy of the English, Hyder was regarded as the best friend of the French, and several adroit

* Clive, in a letter to Smith, strongly expressed his sense of the absurd conduct of the presidency of Madras, whose mismanagement had spoiled everything. "Whoever may have been to blame," he says, "no impeachment can be laid against you. I need not enter into reflections upon the fundamental errors of the war. For the honour of the nation and the company, I wish they could be for ever buried in oblivion, or at least remembered only by ourselves, to warn us upon any future occasion. The measure of sending field-deputies has justly been condemned by everybody. *Gentlemen in the civil service may be very properly employed out of the presidency in the collection of the revenues; but nothing can be more absurd and pernicious than sending them to a camp, where they can only embarrass or obstruct plans and operations which they do not understand.*"

and experienced men quitted Pondicherry to join the Mysorean chief, and to give him the benefit of their advice. These Frenchmen confirmed him in the opinion he had already formed—that he ought to avoid pitched battles with the English, and make use of his advantage in rapid light cavalry to cut off their detachments, and plunder, burn, and destroy the country from which they and their nabob, Mohammed Ali, drew their supplies. Pursuing this scheme, Hyder surprised several English posts, took a considerable number of prisoners, whom he sent off to Seringapatam, where they were barbarously treated, and devastated all the country through which he passed. Having scarcely any cavalry, the English could neither come up with him nor intercept him: while they were wearing themselves out by forced marches on their own legs, his people on horses flitted from place to place, being seldom seen, and even seldom heard of, until they had plundered and burnt some town or village. The presidency of Madras, becoming sensible of some of their follies, now restored Colonel Smith to the command, and recalled the two deputies, who had long before arrived at the conviction that their proper place was not the camp or the field, but the council-chamber. They could not, however, improvise regiments of cavalry, and for want of that arm Smith's operations were for the most part impeded or frustrated. Smith did all that an able officer could do: he covered and protected several rich districts, he checked the career of many of the flying squadrons; but he could not move with sufficient rapidity to prevent the execution of a plan which Hyder had formed after paying two visits to Pondicherry, and conferring with the French there. The Mysorean, having previously sent off all his plunder and heavy baggage, made a rush upon Madras with 6000 horse, and appeared, sudden and unexpected as a cloud in the Indian summer, upon the heights of St. Thomas, which overlook Madras. Fort St. George had lost none of its strength, but the town and the black town, the warehouses, the country-houses, the villages all round about, were as weak and defenceless now as at the time of Tippoo's visit, and a large amount of property lay at the mercy of Hyder, who might have destroyed or carried off everything before Colonel Smith could possibly arrive. The presidency, being, *moreover*, dispirited by the course the war had taken, eagerly proposed terms of peace, or listened to terms proposed by Hyder, who was anxious to be well on his road homeward before Smith should draw near Madras. Negotiations were begun and finished in a very few hours. It was agreed that Hyder should restore whatever he had taken in the way of territory from the English, and that the English should restore all that they had taken from *him*; that he should assist the English in their future *defensive* wars, and that they should assist him, not in any offensive war, but in the defence of Mysore if it should be invaded by any of his neighbours. The treaty concluded on the 4th of April, 1769, was soon followed by the invasion of Mysore by the Mahrattas, whose alliance with Hyder was as little binding and of as short a duration as Indian alliances usually were. The Peishwa Madhoo Row, whose cavalry was as rapid as Hyder's and far more numerous, swept everything before him, and, burning towns, and cutting off noses and ears, this savage seemed to threaten Mysore with a far more extensive ruin than that which the Mysoreans had recently inflicted on the Carnatic. Hyder called upon the presidency of Madras for the assistance agreed upon in the late treaty; but the presidency—and apparently with perfect truth—affirmed that Hyder had brought the war upon himself by making preparations to invade the territory of the Peishwa, and by leaguing himself with some disaffected Mahratta chiefs; * he was not, they said, engaged in a purely defensive war, and, therefore, they were not bound to send him aid and succour. As his difficulties increased, Hyder offered money and endeavoured to work upon the fears of the English by representing what turbulent and dangerous neighbours the Mahrattas would

* It appears, indeed, that Hyder's first application to the English was to aid and assist him in an offensive war against the Peishwa.

prove to them—and near neighbours they must be, if allowed to conquer and occupy Mysore. The war, he said, was now purely defensive on his part. Still the English evaded his demands, not directly refusing compliance with them, but declining to send a single gun or a single sepoy.

At this moment there was as mischievous a splitting of authority and opinion in the council at Madras as there had recently been in the camp of Colonel Smith. From the opinion entertained of his address and abilities, Warren Hastings had been appointed second in council at Madras in March, 1769, and he had arrived at Fort St. George in the autumn of that year. He remained at Madras till the beginning of 1772, but his time appears to have been chiefly occupied with the subjects of the Nabob of Arcot's debts and the investments of the company. He was not in the country when some of the worst things were done; and his opinion was overruled in many things while he was there. The English ministry had sent out Sir John Lindsay (in 1770) with some frigates "to give countenance and protection to the company's settlements and affairs;" the company themselves had put all their vessels of war in the Indian seas under the command of Sir John, who was further appointed, by commission under the great seal, his majesty's minister plenipotentiary, with powers to negotiate and conclude arrangements with the sovereigns of India in general.* With all these appointments and powers, Sir John Lindsay assumed an authority to which the presidency very unwillingly and very imperfectly submitted; quarrels arose, and each party determined to see as black what the other saw as white. The Peishwa of the Mahrattas, forgetting how short a time had elapsed since he broke his treaty with the English and the Nizam, and laughed in the face of Colonel Todd, who was dispatched to remonstrate and to prove the sanctity of such engagements, courted a new alliance with the English, and intimated to Mohammed Ali that the Carnatic should be swept by the Mahratta cavalry from end to end, and from the ghauts to the sea, if he and his friends the English did not agree to an immediate treaty. Sir John Lindsay embraced the opinion of Mohammed Ali that the Mahrattas should be gratified; the president and the council insisted that the English ought to remain neutral, and refuse the alliance proposed by the Peishwa. Violent altercations ensued, but Sir John was unable to enforce his will, and the Mahrattas and Mysoreans were left to fight out their own battles. Hyder and his son Tippoo were defeated in several encounters; once the father owed his life to the swiftness of his horse, and once the son saved himself by putting on the disguise of a beggar. Seringapatam, their capital, was surrounded and besieged, but could scarcely be taken by an army of horse without battering cannon and without the skill to use them.

On the loud complaints of the presidency of Madras and the directors in Leadenhall-street, ministers recalled Sir John Lindsay, and sent out Sir Robert Harland, without restricting his powers. Harland, who is described as rather more violent and headstrong, took up the plans, notions, and prejudices of his predecessor. He represented the state of neutrality as disgraceful and highly dangerous; and, as in the month of November, 1771, shortly after his arrival on the coast, the Mahrattas seemed in possession of all Mysore except Seringapatam and some of the strongest forts, and were certainly pressing upon and plundering the frontiers of the Carnatic, Harland hotly urged the presidency to conclude the alliance the Peishwa demanded. But the president and council of Madras, supported by the other presidencies, steadily refused to

* The appointment of Sir John Lindsay proceeded *in part from* a conviction in the mind of George III. and his ministers that a mercantile body like the company ought not to be vested with the right of keeping up diplomatic relations with sovereign princes in India, and in part from the representations and intrigues of the Nabob Mohammed Ali himself, who for a considerable time had had a party and a sort of agency in London, where his enormous debts both to the company and to individuals were a subject of almost daily discussion, long before they attracted the notice of parliament. Mohammed Ali was generally called in Europe—from the name of his capital—the Nabob of Arcot. "The debts of the Nabob of Arcot" became a cuckoo-note in England.

take part in the war against Hyder, or to form any new treaty with the Peishwa. The king's commissioner could not dispose of the company's land forces. The presidency sent an army towards the frontiers, and the Mahrattas, who had only entered upon the skirts of the Carnatic in small plundering squadrons, withdrew altogether from that neighbourhood. Afraid of provoking the English to join Hyder, distressed by want of provisions in the country which he had ravaged, and now not unfrequently harassed or defeated by the Mysoreans, who had recovered heart, the Peishwa listened to the mediating voice of Mohammed Ali, accepted some money from him, and finally agreed to make peace with Hyder. The treaty was concluded in the month of July, 1772: the Mahrattas obtained a considerable portion of the more northern and inland provinces of Mysore, together with fifteen lacs of rupees in hand, and the promise of fifteen more. For a time Hyder remained humbled and quiet. During the war between him and the Mahrattas the Rajah of Tanjore attempted to seize some territory belonging to, or claimed by, Mohammed Ali, who called upon his allies, the English, for assistance and vengeance. The rajah then courted by turns Hyder and the Peishwa. The Nabob of the Carnatic, after inducing the presidency to make some hostile demonstrations near the Tanjore frontier, became apprehensive that the English might conquer that country for themselves, instead of conquering it for him. He offered to give the company a good round sum for the dominion; and after some hesitation his offer was accepted, and an agreement was concluded by which Tanjore was to be annexed to the Carnatic, to which by nature it certainly belonged. An army assembled at Trichinopoly was ready to march on the 12th of September (1771); but it was found, upon inspection, that Mohammed Ali's own son, who had been intrusted with the department of provisions, had betrayed his trust, and that there was not rice in the camp for the consumption of a single day.* By extraordinary exertions supplies were procured, and the army, being put in motion, crossed the Tanjore frontier, gained possession of Vellum, one of the bulwarks of the country, and by the 23rd encamped before the city of Tanjore, on the very ground on which Lally had been so unfortunate. As the place was still very strong and numerously garrisoned, it was necessary to besiege it in a regular manner. On the 27th of October the English engineer officers reported that the breach would be practicable next morning. But on that very day another son of the Nabob of the Carnatic—not his second son, who had played false with the rice, but his eldest son, Omdut-ul-Omrah, called by the English the young nabob—who had accompanied the expedition, signed a peace with the Rajah of Tanjore, who engaged to pay an immense sum of money, to surrender the districts which the nabob claimed, and which were assumed to be the original cause of the quarrel, to defray all the expenses of the expedition, to aid the nabob with his troops in all future wars, and to demolish, if required, the fortress of Vellum.*

The presidency of Madras were incensed at these proceedings, and they sent orders not to evacuate Vellum or withdraw the batteries from Tanjore until the rajah should have made good one of his promised payments in money and jewels. They foresaw that the rajah would not be punctual; and when the paying time was past it was declared that he had broken the treaty. To prevent the renewal of hostilities the rajah consented to leave the fort of Vellum to the English, and to cede to them two districts in the neighbourhood of Madura. But these confessions of weakness soon tempted another attack; and in the month of March of the next year (1772) another army marched from Trichinopoly to reduce the

* Letter of Colonel Smith, as cited by Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.

* Before putting an end to hostilities in this way, Omdut-ul-Omrah had had a serious quarrel with his English allies. He was informed that, by the usages of war, the plunder of places taken by storm belonged to the captors, and it was the prospect of this very plunder that had allured him to Tanjore. He offered a fixed sum of money to the troops in lieu of it; but it was considered a Jew's bargain; the offer was rejected, and violent altercations took place.

polygars of the Marawars, who paid the rajah a doubtful allegiance, as they had formerly done to the Nabobs of the Carnatic. The invading force consisted of 520 British, infantry and artillery, three battalions of the company's sepoys, six battering cannon, some of the nabob's horse, and two battalions of sepoys in his pay. Oudut-ul-Omrah, the young nabob, accompanied the expedition, having previously been bound by the English not to make any more treaties without their knowledge and consent. By another bargain, however, he was to be allowed the plunder of the towns taken, upon contract, *i. e.* he was to pay a fixed sum to the troops. Ramanadporam, the capital of the greater Marawar, was taken by storm early in April, and in it was captured the polygar, a boy of twelve years, with his mother and his treasury. By the middle of June the troops of the Nabob of the Carnatic were put in possession of all the other forts in that country. But the conquest of the lesser Marawar was a work of greater difficulty, and the inhabitants, being dispossessed of their lands and barbarously treated both by the troops of the company and the troops of the nabob, continued their resistance after their polygar had been betrayed and killed. The whole war in the Marawars left a dark stain on the reputation of the English. Before it was finished, Mohammed Ali, greedy for more conquests, complained to the president of Madras that the Rajah of Tanjore had violated the recent treaty, by delaying payment of money, by applying to the Mahrattas and to Hyder Ali for assistance, and by encouraging the Cooleries to descend from their hills and ravage the frontiers of the Carnatic. He offered ten lacs of pagodas and other advantages if the English would only assist him in another expedition against Tanjore. The president and council soon concluded that the existence of the Rajah of Tanjore was incompatible with their own safety; that it was dangerous to have such a power in the heart of the Carnatic; that the rajah, in case of a war, would be sure to join the French; and, finally, "that the propriety and expediency of embracing the present opportunity of reducing him entirely, before such an event took place, were evident." They then engaged that Mohammed Ali should provide all the money, stores, and provisions necessary for the expedition, and pay the presidency for 10,000 sepoys instead of 7000. The nabob again bargained with the troops for the plunder; and on the 3rd of August, 1773, the army marched from Trichinopoly to the often assailed city of Tanjore, which was taken by assault on the 16th of September, though defended by 20,000 fighting men. The unfortunate rajah and his family were made prisoners, and were allowed to be treated in a barbarous manner by the son and the people of the Nabob of the Carnatic, in whom was now vested the long-coveted sovereignty of Tanjore, although the company, by the treaty of 1762, had given the rajah security for his throne.*

In all these transactions the presidency of Madras had proceeded on their own responsibility, without orders from the court of directors in Leadenhall-street, who were not informed of their plans and projects until after their execution. Yet, even when duly informed of all that had taken place in Tanjore, the directors seemed to feel no anxiety about the matter; and it was not until the beginning of the year 1775 that, in the course of electing a new governor of Madras, attention was called to the subject. In the court of directors a small majority carried the nomination of Mr. Rumbold; but it was afterwards voted at a court of proprietors, also by a small majority, that the directors should be recommended to appoint Lord Pigot, who had signed the treaty of 1762, and who disapproved of all that had been done in infraction of it. Pigot, the correspondent and friend of Clive, had held the post of governor down to the year 1763, when he had returned to England with wealth, consideration, and influence, which had raised him first to a baronetcy and then to an Irish peerage. He wished to reform the presidency of Madras, which certainly cried for reformation, as his friend Clive had reformed Bengal. His election was secured, and before he departed for India the court of directors passed sentence of condemnation on the

* Colonel Wilks.—Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.

policy which had been pursued by the presidency, and declared their opinion that, on account of oppressions constantly exercised by the Nabob of the Carnatic, the Tanjoreans would submit to any power rather than to his.

Lord Pigot arrived at Fort St. George on the 11th of December, 1775; and, though obstructed by all kinds of difficulties and intrigues, he proceeded forthwith to undo what the presidency had done, and to arrange the restoration of the rajah. The English garrison that remained in Tanjore was reinforced; the rajah and his family were set at liberty; and in the month of April, Lord Pigot having repaired in person to that city, the rajah was re-proclaimed in his capital. But in this new shuffling of the cards each party accused the other of foul play and of personal and the most interested motives. Fierce quarrels ensued, and some of the revolutionary tricks which they had been playing in the divans of nabobs and rajahs came to be repeated in their own council-chamber. The end of all this was, that the council deposed Lord Pigot, arrested him in his carriage, and placed him in confinement, suspending at the same time every member of the council that had voted with him.* These summary proceedings excited not merely the courts of directors and proprietors, where not a few approved of them, or at least disapproved of the policy and conduct of Pigot, but they also raised a storm in both Houses of Parliament which was heard in long echoes through every part of the country. After various proceedings, difficult to describe with brevity, and difficult to be understood if given even in the fullest detail, the company recalled the members of the council who had displaced and imprisoned Lord Pigot, and restored his lordship to his office, but commanded him at the same time to return to England immediately, and deliver over the government to his successor, Rumbold, his old opponent. But before these orders reached Madras Lord Pigot was in his grave: his imprisonment had preyed upon his health and spirits, and he had died about eight months after his arrest.* Sir Thomas Rumbold, a most money-making man, arrived at Madras in February, 1778, and took the civil government upon himself, Major-General Hector Monro having the chief command of the forces. By this time the Carnatic was again threatened by the arms of Hyder Ali, and of his now close allies, the French: but before bringing the Mysorean through the ghauts, with his 100,000 men, it will be necessary to narrate some important proceedings in other parts.

* Admiral Pigot declared in the House of Commons that his brother had been offered a bribe, amounting in English money to 600,000*l.*, if he would only defer the reinstatement of the Rajah of Tanjore.

* In April, 1779, Admiral Pigot, the brother of his lordship, moved and carried a series of resolutions in the House of Commons, among which was an address to the throne for the prosecution of four of the members of the Madras council, who had returned to England. The delinquents were tried in the courts of law, but only for a misdemeanor; and the verdict of a special jury was obtained against them. When brought up for judgment their only punishment was a fine of 1000*l.* each, which, to men so wealthy, was scarcely a punishment at all—was not so severe as taking 5*s.* from a poor man for being drunk and disorderly.

# CHAPTER XII.

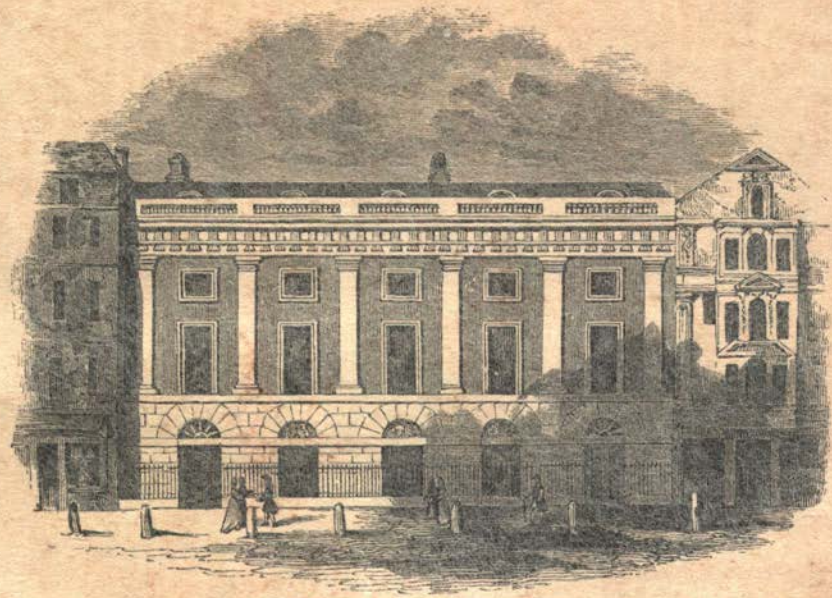
## A.D. 1769-74. ENGLISH LEGISLATION FOR INDIA.

SHORTLY after Clive's return to England the affairs of the company attracted universal attention, and the territorial acquisitions made in India, being exaggerated even beyond their real extent and importance, were forced upon the serious consideration of the ministry of the day, whose chief business for some time past had been the John Wilkes war. In April, 1769, an act was passed confirming to the company the revenues of the countries they had obtained in India for five years to come, upon consideration of their paying the British government 400,000*l.* per annum, and exporting to India certain quantities of British manufactures, &c. At the same the court of directors resolved to send out to Calcutta three supervisors, to complete the work of reformation, and to put the revenues and finances of Bengal under better management. The three individuals selected were, Mr. Vansittart, who had so miserably misgoverned Bengal before; Mr. Scrafton, whose abilities and local knowledge and acquaintance with the language of the country were of inestimable value; and Colonel Forde, who had conquered the Northern Circars and disposed of the Dutch at Bedarra. Government was applied to for two ships of the line and some frigates, and ministers gratified them with two frigates and a small squadron to check piracy in the Persian Gulf. Messrs. Vansittart and Scrafton and Colonel Forde took their departure in the 'Aurora,' one of the frigates, which is supposed to have foundered at sea with every soul on board, for she never reached Bengal, and was never heard of anywhere else after leaving the Cape of Good Hope.*

Without supervisors, the government of Bengal was left in the hands of Mr. Cartier; but in less than two years it was notified by the court of directors to Mr. Warren Hastings, who had continued to rise in estimation, that he was nominated to the place of second in council at Calcutta; and that, as soon as Mr. Cartier should retire, it was their wish that he should take upon himself the charge of government till further orders. The transactions in India, which for a long period were regarded with indifference, or with the feeling that it was impossible for people in England to comprehend them, were now daily attracting more and more attention. Orme, the friend of Clive, who had himself taken no inactive or unimportant part in those affairs, had published the first part of his History of the Military Transactions in Hindustan,

* In a letter written to a friend at the time the supervisorship was appointed, Clive says, "The severe blow given the old directors last year, by the admission of Sulivan and so many of his party, has been the occasion of all that has happened; and we were obliged to compound with Vansittart for his being supervisor jointly with Scrafton and Forde, to prevent his going out governor to Bengal, or governor-general, which was the thing aimed at. Mr. Vansittart received all the support which the ministry, the court, and the princess dowager could give, and was very near succeeding in his ambitious designs." It was through the influence and exertions of Clive that those two able men Scrafton and Forde were joined with Vansittart.

A few days later, writing to another friend in India, Clive, who seems to have been pretty equally disgusted with the weak government in Downing-street and the government in Leadenhall-street, says—"Anarchy and confusion seem to have pervaded every part of the British empire. In vain can we expect our affairs shall flourish abroad when all is going to ruin at home. The directors are so divided among themselves, and so much taken up in struggling for power at every general election, that they have quite lost sight of the company's interest, which is daily sacrificed to their own views and the views of particular proprietors, to answer their purposes."



Old East India House, Leadenhall-street.

No. 12.

and had spread the renown of Clive, the real hero of the romantic story, making known at the same time the vastness and importance of that Indian world. Other works of less name had treated the same subject, and many pens and tongues had been engaged in demonstrating that the glory acquired by British arms was now tarnished by abuses and corruption; and that the splendid fabric, like a Fata Morgana, was disappearing faster than it had risen. Moreover, few men not holders of India stock could reconcile themselves to the anomaly presented in Leadenhall-street, nor possibly conceive how a dozen or two of plain citizens called directors, and some hundreds of shareholders called proprietors, could be competent to the management of 15,000,000 of people at the distance of many thousands of miles. Nor was there much faith in the disinterestedness or moderation of a body so constituted, nor any confidence that their uncontrolled power could be exercised upon pure principles of right and wrong. People heard the court of directors accused of ignorance and obstinacy, fraud and rapacity, cruelty and gross injustice; and they were disposed to give credit to the worst of these reports.

Indeed, in opening the session of parliament in January, 1772, the speech from the throne had, by implication, recommended to attention the subject of India, as being among the dependencies of the empire of which it was said that "some of them, as well from remoteness of place as from other circumstances, are so peculiarly liable to abuses and exposed to danger, that the interposition of the legislature for their protection may become necessary." And about two months after this speech, and about four months before the first application of the directors to the Bank of England for money, Clive's old antagonist, Mr. Sulivan, then deputy-chairman of the court of directors, moved in his place in the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill "for the better regulation of the affairs of the East India Company and of their servants in India, and for the due administration of justice in Bengal." Sulivan's principal object in the speech with which he introduced and supported this motion, was to shift all blame from the court of directors, and to throw it wholly and solely upon the servants of the company abroad. He did not spare the great Clive himself; but pointed at him more or less directly as the fountain-head of mischief. There was little danger in pursuing this course, as Sulivan well knew that the conqueror of Bengal was hated at the India House, was now unconnected with any of the powerful factions which divided parliament, was considered too proud and unbending to procure the support of the court and ministry, and was rendered by various arts and practices an object of popular odium and detestation. These practices had begun on the same day with his stern reforms at Calcutta, and they had been kept up ever since by many heads, hands, and purses. His old enemies at the India House—the Sulivan party—always powerful, had been reinforced by men still more violent and implacable. "The whole crew of pilferers and oppressors, from whom he had rescued Bengal," says Mr. Macaulay, "persecuted him with the implacable rancour which belongs to such abject natures. Many of them even invested their property in India stock merely that they might be better able to annoy the man whose firmness had set bounds to their rapacity. Lying newspapers were set up for no purpose but to abuse him; and the temper of the public mind was then such that these arts, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been ineffectual against truth and merit, produced an extraordinary impression.

"The great events which had taken place in India had called into existence a new class of Englishmen, to whom their countrymen gave the name of Nabobs. These persons had generally sprung from families neither ancient nor opulent; they had generally been sent at an early age to the East; and they had there acquired large fortunes, which they had brought back to their native land. It was natural that, not having had much opportunity of mixing with the best society, they should exhibit some of the awkwardness and some of the pomposity of upstarts. It was natural that, during their sojourn in Asia, they should have acquired some

tastes and habits surprising, if not disgusting, to persons who had never quitted Europe. It was natural that, having enjoyed great consideration in the East, they should not be disposed to sink into obscurity at home; and as they had money, and had not birth or high connexion, it was natural that they should display a little obtrusively the advantages which they possessed. Wherever they settled there was a kind of feud between them and the old nobility and gentry, similar to that which raged in France between the farmer-general and the marquis. This enmity to the aristocracy long continued to distinguish the servants of the company. More than twenty years after the time of which we are now speaking, Burke pronounced that among the Jacobins might be reckoned 'the East Indians almost to a man, who cannot bear to find that their present importance does not bear a proportion to their wealth.'" * According to the same able sketch of what the rich men of the East were, or rather what they were considered to be, in their palmy days, the nabobs, whose exploits and services were little understood in England, were universally odious: the humane man was horror-struck at the way in which they had got their money, and the thrifty man at the way in which they spent it; they were accused of raising the price of everything where they settled, "from fresh eggs to rotten boroughs,"—the latter a commodity in which they dealt largely; they were hated by the class from which they had sprung, and by that into which they attempted to force themselves; † the foibles of comedy, the extravagant absurdities of farce, and the darkest crimes of tragedy, were mixed up in the popular conception of a nabob; and writers, the most unlike in sentiment and style—methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons—joined in decrying the whole class, filling sermons and jest-books, essays, farces, and novels, with denunciations, satire, strictures, lampoons, and every kind of abuse directed against them. Such was the popular estimate of nabobs; and Clive, the greatest of them all, was held to be the worst. It was in vain that he was kind and liberal to his servants, bountiful to his friends, generous on all occasions, affectionate to his family, kind-hearted and hospitable; men persisted in considering him as an incarnate fiend, laying to his charge all the bad acts of all the English in India—acts committed when he was absent, nay, acts which he had manfully put down, and severely punished—and believing every story that could be invented against him. The peasantry in the neighbourhood of Claremont, in Surrey, where he had raised one stately mansion, were perfectly convinced that the devil would one day carry him away bodily, in spite of his strong, thick walls; and that they could hear, in the wind that sighed among the park trees, the moans of the Indian princes he had tortured to get at their treasure.

* Art. on Malcolm's Life of Clive.

† It is to be noticed, however, that not a few of these men from the East, called, and treated as, *parvenus*, could boast good stock and lineage. The family of Clive, for example, though fallen upon poverty and evil days, was ancient and of good repute in Shropshire, where they had possessed the estate of Styche (the hero's birth-place), in the parish of Moreton-Say, near Market Drayton, for many generations. It is said that the first establishment of the Clives in those parts dates from the reign of Henry II. The family of Warren Hastings claimed a still more ancient descent. His own grandfather, who is said to have been an antiquary of no mean reputation, pretended to trace back their pedigree to Hastings, the Dane, and to a period long preceding the Norman conquest—the starting point of most of our proudest genealogies. This may have been a mere dream of the old antiquary; but it is said to be certain that the Hastings held the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, in the reign of Edward I. But Clive's father, having a family of six sons and seven daughters, and much less than 500*l.* a year to support them (the estate not being worth more than that thirty years after, when the value of such property had risen), and when the fortunate soldier had paid off certain mortgages and incumbrances), betook himself to the study of the law, and practised as a country lawyer for many years. As for Hastings, his family estate had been alienated or reduced to wreck and ruin during the great civil war: his grandfather, the antiquary, was a poor country parson, and his father, Pynaston Hastings, who married in his sixteenth year, was, as might be expected, still poorer than his grandfather. The future governor general of Bengal was indeed cradled in wretchedness, and brought up in squalor and poverty, until an uncle, who had a place in the Custom-house, took charge of him, got him admitted a king's scholar at Westminster school, and afterwards procured him the appointment of writer for Calcutta.

Sulivan and his party, which had now become the stronger in Leadenhall-street, were alarmed and exasperated by reports, not unfounded, that the premier, Lord North, and Lord Rochford, then secretary of state for the colonies, had invited Clive, through his friend Wedderburn, to aid them with his counsel and experience in settling some plan for the better government of India; and it was no secret that Clive on all occasions insisted that the cause of what was wrong lay rather in the court of directors than in their servants abroad; that all attempts at reformation abroad, until a thorough reformation took place at home, could only be temporary, and in the end futile; that if an able, honest, and independent court of directors could not be procured at home, there was no salvation for the company.* Under these feelings the directors had recently put every engine in play to blacken his reputation; and about a fortnight before the opening of the present session of parliament they had, by the company's secretary, informed him that the court of directors had lately received several papers containing charges respecting his management of affairs in Bengal, and that copies of these papers were enclosed. These charges were signed by no one, and they were vague as well as anonymous. Clive proudly replied, that upon the public records of the company, where the whole of his conduct was stated, they might find a sufficient confutation of the papers they had transmitted to him; and that he could not but suppose, that if any part of his conduct had been injurious to the service, contradictory to his engagements, or even mysterious, four years and a half since his return to England would not have elapsed without his being called to account. These charges, however, were known to the public before parliament met, and Sulivan in his speech hinted at them. Clive, who was in the House, rose to speak in his own defence, and he delivered a speech which astonished every one, by its strong sense, high spirit, and even high eloquence. He had seldom spoken before, and on those few occasions in a brief and homely, or negligent, manner; but this time he had prepared himself for the defence of his honour and his property, which were equally aimed at, and he convinced the most practised and most applauded speakers that he might easily have made himself a great orator. The first Pitt, now Earl of Chatham, was that night under the gallery of the House of Commons, and he declared that it was "one of the most finished pieces of eloquence he had ever heard in that House." "The House," said Clive, "will give me leave to remove evil impressions, and to endeavour to restore myself to its favourable opinion. Nor do I wish to lay my conduct before this House only; I speak likewise to my country in general, upon whom I put myself, not only without reluctance but with alacrity." He rapidly sketched the history of his proceedings during his last mission to Calcutta, which the directors, after all their plaudits, had selected for their hostile charges; he told the House how he had cleansed that Augean stable, and how this conduct had raised him a host of enemies. "It is that conduct," he exclaimed, "which has occasioned the public papers to teem with scurrility and abuse against me ever since my return to England. It is that conduct which has occasioned these charges. But it is that conduct which enables me now, when the day of judgment is come, to look my judges in the face. It is that conduct which enables me to lay my hand upon my heart and most solemnly to declare to this House, to the gallery, and to the whole world at large, that I never, in a single instance, lost sight of what I thought the honour and true interest of my country and the company; that I was never guilty of any acts of violence or oppression, unless the bringing offenders to justice can be deemed so; that, as to extortion, such an idea never entered into my mind; that I did not suffer those under me to commit any acts of violence, oppression, or extortion; that my influence was never employed for the advantage of any man, contrary to the strictest principles of honour and justice; and that, so far from reaping any benefit myself from the expedition, I returned to

* Clive's Letters, in Life by Sir John Malcolm.

England many thousand pounds out of pocket." One of the charges in the anonymous papers was, that during that mission he had made money by monopolizing cotton. To this he replied, in evident irritation and pride,—"Trade was not my profession. My line has been military and political. I owe all I have in the world to my having been at the head of an army; and, as to cotton, I know no more about it than the pope of Rome." Another of the charges was, that he had monopolized diamonds. After observing that at that period there were only two ways by which a servant of the company could remit his fortune to England—by bills on the company, or by diamonds—that, in consequence of his exertions, the treasury at Calcutta was so rich, that it would not receive money for such bills, and that therefore he had sent an agent into a distant and independent part of India to invest his money in precious stones; he added—"Those diamonds were not sent home clandestinely. I caused them to be registered; I paid the duties upon them; and these remittances turned out three per cent. worse than bills of exchange upon the company. This is all I know of a monopoly of diamonds." By a surprising boldness, on the part of those who made it, another charge was that he had occasioned the late famine in Bengal by establishing "a monopoly of salt, betel-nut, tobacco, and other commodities." "How," said Clive, "a monopoly of salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, in the years 1765 and 1766, could occasion a want of rain and scarcity of rice in the year 1770 is past my comprehension. I confess I cannot answer that part of this article; and as to the *other commodities*, as they have not been specified, I cannot say anything to them." He defended the appropriation of the salt trade to the payment of proper salaries, and his acceptance of Meer Jaffier's legacy, of which he had made a donation for improving the company's military service, and for providing for the unfortunate. From defending his own conduct he proceeded to attack the conduct of others, and to throw back the blame on his accusers. "I attribute," he said, "the present bad situation of affairs to four causes: a relaxation of government in my successors; great neglect on the part of administration; notorious misconduct on the part of the directors; and the violent and outrageous proceedings of general courts." He argued that all the evils were aggravated by the system of annual elections at Leadenhall-street; that one-half of the year was employed by the directors in discharging obligations contracted by their last election, and the second half of the year spent in incurring new obligations for securing their election the next year by clandestine bargains with proprietors and others, and the daily sacrifice of some interest of the company. Hence, he said, the orders sent out to India had been so fluctuating, and in many instances so unintelligible, that the servants in the country, who, to say the truth, had generally understood the interests of the company much better than the directors, had in many instances followed their own opinion rather than their orders.*

One effect of this remarkable speech was that Clive's enemies changed their mode of attack, and, leaving his last administration in India as unassailable, turned their arms against the events and deeds of his earlier life. Sulivan obtained leave to bring in the bill without a division, but, although it was afterwards read a first and second time, and also committed, it was ultimately dropped. Meanwhile, in April, 1772, three days before the bill was brought in, it was represented by the opposition that the suspicions of the country were excited, and that a full inquiry into the past ought to precede any legislation for the future, and a motion was made and carried for the appointing a select committee to make the necessary inquiry. The members of the select committee, thirty-one in number, were appointed by ballot, and Colonel Burgoyne, who had proposed it, was chosen chairman. Burgoyne, who was distinguishing himself as a debater, and giving that trouble to ministers which is said to have led to their employing him

* The speech, which, with the documents read in the course of it, fills nearly forty columns of the Parliamentary History, is there stated to be given from Clive's own corrected copy.

in America a few years after, was exceedingly hostile to Clive, and exceedingly anxious to collect materials for a grand opposition speech. Governor Johnstone, another leading orator in the house, and brother to Johnstone the member of council at Calcutta, whose face Clive had made pale and long, was also a member of the committee, and took a leading part in their proceedings. There were other men in it almost equally hostile to Clive; but his lordship himself was a member, as was also his friend and dependant, Mr. Strachey, who had accompanied him in his last mission to Calcutta. The most violent personal feelings instantly showed themselves: instead of inquiring, in the words of Burgoyne's motion, into the nature, state, and condition of the East India Company, and of the British affairs in the East Indies generally, the select committee directed their inquiry almost exclusively to the conduct of Lord Clive, carefully shunning his last administration, and going back fifteen years to the dethronement of Suraj-u-Dowlah. But, notwithstanding an evident disposition to hurry over the business and to receive any evidence against Clive, the committee had made little progress when parliament rose, and, though they had engaged to sit during the summer, they could seldom collect a quorum. The parliament had hardly risen when the pecuniary embarrassments of the company became too great and pressing to be concealed. On the 17th of March, in their anxiety to captivate the shareholders, the court of directors had recommended an augmentation of the dividend from twelve to twelve and a-half, and the necessary votes were carried through both courts by overwhelming majorities, and this, too, though many must have known there was not money in the treasury to meet the bills that were falling due. But at the beginning of the month of July their cashier drew Mr. Sulivan's attention to this important fact. A committee of treasury was called forthwith, and, upon an estimate of receipts and payments for the months of July, August, September, and October, it appeared there would be a deficit of 1,293,000*l.* On the 15th of July the directors applied to the Bank of England for a loan of 400,000*l.* for two months, which was granted; and on the 29th of July they asked a further loan of 300,000*l.*, but only got 200,000*l.*, the Bank directors being somewhat alarmed.

On the 10th of August Mr. Sulivan and the chairman waited upon the minister, and announced the insolvency and ruin of the company as inevitable if they were not allowed to borrow at least a million more from the public. It happened to them as to other men when reduced to the disagreeable condition of borrowers. Those from whom they asked money thought proper to give them advice, and to interfere in their affairs. They were in a manner at the mercy of ministers, and ministers soon determined to remodel their constitution, and make several important changes, notwithstanding the letter of their charters, which had been granted under totally different circumstances—to a body of traders and merchant adventurers, and not to merchant princes, and lords and masters of provinces and kingdoms. For the present, however, Lord North received the chairman and deputy-chairman with dryness and reserve, merely referring them to parliament for the aid and assistance they wanted. By a strange perversion of reason or argument Clive has been accused of being the main cause of the company's difficulties, from his predicting to them that an immense surplus would accrue annually from Bengal, after his settling affairs and correcting abuses there. This sanguine promise, it is said, rendered the directors careless and extravagant, and induced them to raise their dividends, and to agree to pay the 400,000*l.* per annum into the national exchequer. But Clive's system of economy, regularity, and vigilance had been abandoned as soon as he left India, and circumstances which he could neither foresee nor control had occurred in that country. For example, the presidency of Madras, by engaging in and shamefully mismanaging the new wars in the Carnatic, had acted as a continual drain on the treasury at Calcutta; extensive fortifications and cantonments which Clive considered wholly unnecessary had been undertaken at Calcutta and other places in Bengal, the engineers, contractors, and all en-

gaged in their construction being allowed to make the most extravagant bargains; the most nefarious abuses, which Clive would have stopped with the strong hand in an instant, had crept into the commissariat and all other departments of the public service; and finally the rich plains of Bengal had been depopulated by a terrible famine. To use a familiar illustration, Clive may be compared to a merchant who makes over a fine business to another, showing by his books that it is worth 10,000*l.* a year, and may be made worth more by industry, intelligence, and economy. And is that merchant to be blamed if the successor in his business, by negligence, stupidity, and extravagance, by making bad debts, by allowing his clerks and servants to plunder him, by building town-houses and country-houses, starves his business, reduces its value, and then, by a fearful visitation of nature—a famine, a cholera, or a plague—finds one-third of his customers swept away, and himself in a state of insolvency?

During the recess Clive had an audience of the king upon being appointed lord-lieutenant of the county of Salop,* and his majesty talked with him in private upon Indian affairs for nearly half an hour, and with much interest and kindness. His lordship also saw the procrastinating premier. "But," said he, in a letter written after the interview, "Lord North seemed industriously to avoid entering upon the subject of Indian affairs, and I do verily believe, from sheer indolence of temper, he wishes to leave everything to Providence and the directors."† These little incidents are interesting, as helping to make out the character both of the minister and the sovereign, and as showing, what is every day becoming more apparent, George III.'s confirmed habit of consulting, scheming, and acting by himself, and without the presence or concurrence of his ministers. It was no doubt on the king's own movement, and not through any impatient activity on the part of Lord North, that parliament was assembled much earlier than usual,* and that the speech from the throne acquainted the Houses that he wished to give them an early opportunity of informing themselves fully of the true state of the company's affairs, and of making such provisions for the common benefit and security of all the various interests concerned as they should find best adapted to the exigences of the case. To anticipate government, whose aid they wanted without its interference, the company had once more had recourse to the plan of appointing supervisors, with full powers for the regulation of their affairs abroad; and before the meeting of parliament they had actually named six gentlemen to the difficult office. The supervisors, however, had not taken their departure for India, and ministers were determined to annul their powers. On the very day on which the address was voted in the House of Commons, Lord North, who was dissatisfied with the select committee appointed in the preceding session, moved that, for the better ascertaining the distresses and the real condition of the company, a SECRET committee of only thirteen members should be appointed, with power to inspect the books and accounts of the said company. In spite of a violent opposition from the East India directors and others this committee of secrecy *was* appointed. At the same time Burgoyne vindicated the proceedings of the select committee; declared that its inquiries would disclose such a scene of iniquity, rapine, and injustice, such unheard-of cruelties, as were never before discovered: and insisted that its proceedings ought on no account to be interrupted. Ministers were not disposed to any invidious exertion in favour of Clive; it was agreed that the select committee should be continued; and thus there were two committees of inquiry proceeding with their investigations at the same time. In a very few days the committee of secrecy recommended that the company should instantly

* In the following month of December he was appointed lord-lieutenant of Montgomeryshire. In the course of the same year he was installed a Knight of the Bath, the king having conferred the honour upon him some time before. Other honours were not wanting. The queen had stood godmother to his second daughter, Charlotte, and the University of Oxford had conferred upon him the degree of LL.D.

† Letter to Mr. Strachey.

* On the 26th of November.

be stopped from sending out the new supervisors they had appointed, and a bill to this effect, after another sharp struggle, was carried through both houses, to the great disappointment and vexation of the court of directors, who still pretended that they alone had the competency and the right to regulate the affairs of India. Clive, who spoke in the debate on the bill, said he regretted to find the company contending with parliament, because whenever their rights to their great territorial possessions should be examined they would be disputed, and might become the actual possession not of the company but of the crown. He regretted that the company and parliament had not agreed to share the labours and honours of the good work between them. "I consider," said he, "the interests of the company and the interests of this nation as inseparable; and, with respect to the supervisors, I was and continue to be against them. I consider this bill as an exertion indeed of parliamentary authority, yet an extremely necessary one, and I could wish that the company had met this house half-way instead of petitioning and quarrelling with the mouth that is to feed them. With respect to the gentlemen nominated for the supervision, they are themselves the best judges whether their abilities and integrity are equal to the important service in which they were to engage. Had they, Sir, known the East Indies as well as I do, they would shudder at the bare idea of such a perplexing and difficult service. The most rigid integrity with the greatest disinterestedness—the greatest abilities with resolution and perseverance—must be united in the man or men who undertake to reform the accumulating evils which exist in Bengal, and which threaten to involve the nation and the company in one common ruin."

The dissatisfied court of directors had still no resource but in parliament; and on the 24th of February (1773), after having reduced their dividend from 12½ to 6 per cent., a general court passed a vote that application should be made to the Commons for a loan of one million and a half for four years, at 4 per cent. interest. This demand, or humble petition, was presented on the 9th of March. Ministers, making some material alterations in the company's propositions, offered to lend 1,400,000*l.* at 4 per cent., and to give up the claim of 400,000*l.* a year, which the company had been paying from their territorial revenues, till this debt should be discharged; but insisted upon binding them strictly never to raise their dividends above 6 per cent. until this debt should be discharged. By complying with these and some other restrictions and conditions the company were to remain in possession of all the territories they had acquired for six years to come, when their charter would expire. The company petitioned against these terms, as harsh, arbitrary, and illegal: their orators in the House harangued vehemently; but all was of no use: they could not do without the money, the minister was determined to let them have it only on his own conditions, and everything he proposed was carried by a large majority. Nor did Lord North cease his interference here. Clive and others had represented to the minister, and also to the king, who was neither without previous information nor the previous determination or wish to un-democratize the constitution of the East India House, that the court of proprietors was a bear-garden ever full of noise, confusion, anarchy, and the lowest and most selfish intrigues, and that their mode of checking the court of directors, and the direct influence and intimidation they exercised over the directors when elected, must for ever prove an obstacle to all good and permanent management and government. As if to prepare his way by an act of kindness, the minister, on the 27th of April, granted the company that fatal leave to export tea to America duty-free—a bonus which led to the tea riots at Boston, and which assuredly hurried on the American revolution—and then, on the 3rd of May, he introduced a series of propositions, tending to an entire, and, as we think, beneficial change in the constitution of the company. The principal of these were:—1st. That the court of directors should in future, instead of being chosen annually, be elected for four years; six members annually, but none to hold their seats for longer than four years; 2nd. That the qualification stock should be 1000*l.* instead

of 500*l.*; that 3000*l.* should give two votes, and 6000*l.* three votes; 3rd. That, in lieu of the mayor's court at Calcutta, the jurisdiction of which was limited to small mercantile causes, a supreme court of judicature, consisting of a chief justice and three puisne judges, should be appointed by the crown, with great and extended powers of cognizance over the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the subjects of England, their servants and dependants, residing within the company's territories in Bengal; 4th. That a governor-general, with four counsellors, should be appointed to Fort William, and vested with full powers over the other presidencies. When any differences occurred, the opinion of the majority was to be decisive; and this board was to be directed by the act to transmit regular reports of its proceedings to the directors, who were, within fourteen days of the receipt of their dispatches, to furnish copies of them to one of his majesty's secretaries of state, to whom they were also to send copies of any rules and ordinations which they made; and these were, if disapproved by his majesty, to become null and void. It was further proposed that the nomination of the first governor-general and members of council should be vested in parliament by the act, and should be for five years, after which the nomination to those high offices should revert to the court of directors, but still subject to the approbation of the crown. Lastly, it was to be enacted that no person in India, in the service either of the king or of the company, should henceforth be allowed to receive any presents from the native nabobs, rajahs, ministers, agents, or others; and that the governor-general, members of council, and judges should be excluded from all commercial pursuits and profits. This "Regulating Act," as they called it, was to come into operation, in England on the 1st of October, 1773, and in India on the 1st of August, 1774.

The court of directors, the court of proprietors, and nearly all men interested in the affairs of the East Indies, raised a storm ten times louder than before: and they courted and obtained the influence of the corporation of the city of London, which was then in the most determined opposition to government, and to everything done or proposed by Lord North. Remonstrances and petitions poured in upon parliament, but did not affect the votes of the large ministerial majority. It was curious to hear that anomalous body, the company, which assumed to exercise an absolute authority over fifteen millions of men, and which certainly had not yet learned the slow and difficult task of exercising that authority with moderation and wisdom, and for the greater happiness of the natives, resting one of their greatest complaints on the injury that would be done by the ministerial alterations to constitutional liberty, the rights of election, &c. The raising of the qualification of the voters, by which about 1200 proprietors were disfranchised, was held up as a political *enormity* then, and it appears to have been considered in the same light many years after the struggle, the excitement, and the violence were over. Mr. Mill seems to deplore it as a blow struck at the power of the democracy. "In one respect," says he, "the present experiment fulfilled the purpose very completely for which it was intended. It followed the current of that policy which for many reasons has run with perfect regularity and considerable strength, diminishing the influence of numbers in affairs of government, and reducing things as much as possible to the oligarchical state." * To this lamentation may be opposed the unruly, blundering, selfish, and corrupt conduct of the court of proprietors, and the very serious facts that they, from the immediate and incessant control they exercised over the directors, were almost as much an executive as an elective body; that such a numerous executive had never been known to go right and straight; that they were as far as possible from promising to be an exception to this unchanged and unchangeable rule; and that their mistakes and faults directly affected the prosperity of thousands of individuals at home and of millions abroad. Complaints were also made that, by rendering the situation of director of four years' duration instead of one, and free for that time from the control of the court of proprietors, the in-

* Hist. Brit. Ind.

fluence and operation of the ministry would be great and certain: but then, on the other hand, the annual elections had been proved most mischievous; they had, as Clive affirmed, swallowed up nearly all the time and attention of the directors, and new members of that body were liable to be outvoted and turned out of office just as they were beginning to learn its duties, or to know something of the complicated machine which was to be superintended. There were defects, and of a serious nature, in the measure proposed by ministers, who do not appear to have considered it as final, but rather in the light of an experiment which might be modified and altered as time and experience should point out. Such as they were, their proposals were embodied in two acts, which were carried through both Houses by immense majorities, and received the royal assent forthwith. The company continued their complaints and lamentations, but, except among the Wilkites in the city, they found very little sympathy. They had, in fact, grown unpopular as a body, and, whatever doubts may have been entertained in some quarters as to the wisdom of the new measures, or the propriety of augmenting the authority of parliament, which then signified little more than the influence of the court and ministry, the universal feeling appears to have been that some interference was indispensable, and that what was no longer a group of factories, but an empire, ought *not to* be trusted to the sole management of a trading company, who bought and sold fractions of principalities and powers in 'Change Alley.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### 1773.—WARREN HASTINGS GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

In proceeding to the choice of the first governor-general of Bengal there was scarcely any difference of opinion as to the person most fit for the responsible, delicate, and difficult post. Long experience, proved ability, and other merits, all pointed to Mr. Warren Hastings, who was accordingly named by the new parliamentary authority. Clive, though he had not invariably had cause to be pleased with the conduct of Hastings, once his protégé, considered him the best man that could be selected, and he hastened to congratulate him on the honour of being the First Governor-General. In so doing, however, Clive expressed a doubt, in the shape of a hope, and this was, whether his colleagues in the council would act in harmony with him. It is especially deserving of observation that the principal misgiving Clive entertained with regard to Warren Hastings was, that he might err through overmuch good-nature and easiness and amiability of temper.* The four members of council appointed with Warren Hastings, and each with powers nearly co-extensive with his own, were General Clavering, Colonel Monson, Mr. Barwell, and Mr. Philip Francis.

In the mean while, both Indian committees of the House of Commons, the select and the secret, had continued their occupations; and the first of the two, urged on by Burgoyne, the chairman, by Governor Johnstone, and by other men from whom impartiality and candour were as little to be expected, had taken a still more inquisitorial and personal turn. Clive was subjected to incessant examina-

* Some time before this, when Hastings was removed from his secondary post in the council of Madras to be head of the council and governor of Calcutta, Clive said to him, in a letter full of practical wisdom and proper rules for his conduct—"From the knowledge I have of you I am convinced that you have not only abilities and personal resolution, but integrity and moderation with regard to riches: but I thought I discovered in you a diffidence in your own judgment, and too great an easiness of disposition, which may subject you, insensibly, to be *led* where you ought to *guide*." He further told him that, with a proper confidence in himself and a never-failing hope of success, he would find opportunities of making himself one of the most distinguished men of his country. All Clive's behaviour to Hastings appears to have been generous and magnanimous. Hastings, after the first departure of Clive from Calcutta, had attached himself to Governor Vansittart, with whom he returned to Europe before Clive returned to Calcutta in 1765, and through whom he became, to a considerable extent, connected with Sulivan, the mortal enemy of Clive. Hastings had been so little influenced by the money-making spirit that he had not been long in England ere he found himself almost penniless. A common friend (Mr. Sykes), who had accompanied Clive to India on his reforming mission, and who had remained there as a member of the select committee, wrote to his lordship in March, 1768—"Your lordship knows my regard for Mr. Hastings.....I have now brought his affairs nearly to a conclusion, and sorry I am to say they turn out more to the credit of his moderation than knowledge of the world. *He is almost literally worth nothing, and must return to India, or want bread.* I therefore make it my earnest request to your lordship, that, even if you cannot consistently promote his re-appointment to the company's service, you will at least not give any opposition thereto." Forgetting his personal piques, Clive, more powerful then than Sulivan, who could not have prevented the prolongation of Hastings's distressing embarrassments, instantly used all his endeavours to get him out to Madras in a high and lucrative office; and it was through Clive that Hastings was made second in council at that presidency. And afterwards, when Vansittart and the other supervisors had gone to the bottom of the ocean in the Aurora frigate, it was Clive that actively recommended Hastings to be governor of Calcutta, as the man in India the best fitted for the post. It was on seeing this appointment secured that Clive wrote the remarkable letter from which the paragraph at the beginning of this note is taken.

tions and cross-examinations; mutilated evidence, taken out of the company's records by the company's own servants, was received as good evidence, upon the plea that it was impossible to spare time sufficient to search for facts among the vast mass of papers at the India House. When Clive referred to the votes of approbation and the long sounding votes of thanks passed in a series of years by courts of directors and general courts, recorded and preserved in the same depôt in Leadenhall-street, he was no more regarded than if they had been passed and registered in the moon. We would impress on the reader's mind a deep conviction of the money-getting spirit, the greed, the corruption, the jobbery of our public men, patriots included, at this low and mean period of English home history; and convey the notion that strict honour, disinterestedness, a superiority to temptation, and an incapability of treachery and baseness were things not to be expected in so distant and so peculiar a field as India, when they had no recognisable existence in any of the high places in England. The palms of the patriots sitting in either committee must have itched at the long array upon paper of rupees and lacs of rupees; and it may be pretty safely doubted whether there was one of Clive's accusers and tormentors that would, at Moorshedabad, have rested satisfied with the large sum he took when it was so easy to make it larger, when there was absolutely no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation.* On one occasion, when irritated in the extreme, and when the scenes of the past were forced upon his mind and upon his vision as a present reality, he vividly described his entrance into Moorshedabad and into the rich treasury of the flying tyrant Suraj-u-Dowlah:—there was the new nabob, Meer Jaffier, a creature of his making, and absolutely dependent on his will; there was a populous and opulent city offering immense sums to be saved from a plunder which was never intended; there were the Hindoo seits or bankers bidding against each other for his favour; there were vaults piled with gold and crowned with rubies and diamonds, and he was at liberty to help himself;—and then, bursting away from a picture as dazzling as Sinbad's valley of diamonds, he exclaimed, "By God, Mr. Chairman, at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation!" He had unquestionably been guilty in the East of deception, subterfuge, and fraud; but these practices were alien to his frank and fiery nature. Both before the committee and before the whole House he was candid, bold, open, communicative even to excess, making no attempts either at concealment or palliation, but insisting that what he had done was no more than he was bound to do under all the circumstances of the case, and that what he had received was lawful for him to take.

On the 10th of May of the following year, 1773, on the order of the day being read for taking into consideration the report of the select committee appointed in the preceding session, and also certain reports lately presented from a similar committee appointed in the present session, Colonel Burgoyne, who, as chairman, had brought them up, declared the said reports contained an account of the most atrocious and most revolting crimes. The black-hole and its horrors were all forgotten; the cruelty, the perfidy of Suraj-u-Dowlah were consigned to the same charitable oblivion; and it was represented by the military orator, who had had no friend or brother in the horrible catastrophe at Calcutta, that the dethronement of that prince was the greatest of crimes, and the real cause of all the revolutions and mischiefs which had ensued since then. Upon better ground, Burgoyne denounced the fictitious treaty with Omichund; yet he took an incorrect view of the subject of Admiral Watson's signature, and throughout the transaction laid the whole blame upon Clive, although nothing was more notorious, or more capable of proof by written and every other kind of evidence, than that the whole council had concurred and co-operated in that deception as in all other parts of the revolution of 1757. He maintained that Clive ought to be stripped of his wealth, as it had been extorted by military force, and as, like all acquisitions made from foreign powers, it of right belonged to

* Mr. Macaulay.

the state; and he moved three resolutions to this effect,* winding up with the avowal of an intention not to stop here, but to compel all who had acquired sums of money in the way alluded to to make full and complete restitution to the public. Clive made another very able speech, but a speech not calculated to conciliate any party. According to one who was present, and who was friendly to him, "he laid about him on all sides; he reprehended the court of directors past and present, the court of proprietors, the citizens of London, the country gentlemen of England, the servants of the company abroad, the secret and select committees, the opposition, the minister and ministry. He paid a compliment to the king. He declared he would support government where he could do it honourably. He offended the opposition without gaining the minister." These were not the parliamentary tactics of a mean low mind, of one to whom truckling, duplicity, and deception cost nothing when they suited his interest and purpose. He complained of the slander and abuse thrown upon him by the newspaper press, which had called him, and which kept calling him, villain, scoundrel, thief, murderer, assassin, &c.; he explained the circumstances of the revolution undertaken against Suraj-u-Dowlah, so far as he was concerned in it—for, in fact, while he was thousands or many hundred of miles off, absent in England or serving on the Coromandel coast, events had occurred which hardly left any other alternative than the deposition of that nabob or the retreat and flight of the English from Bengal; and, if there were anything wrong or impolitic in the conduct of the English there previous to Suraj-u-Dowlah's march and siege, he had as little to do with that conduct as Burgoyne or any other member of the House of Commons; he defended the legality of the presents he had accepted of, both in point of law and of justice; he once more referred to the honours he had received, not merely from the company but also from the crown, in consequence of the very exploits and acts for which they were now arraigning him like a culprit and felon; and he concluded by saying—"If the record of my services at the India House,* if the defence I have twice made in this House, and if the approbation I have already met with, is not an answer to the attack that has been made upon me, I certainly can make none."† His friend Wedderburn, who was at issue with Thurlow, the attorney-general, but backed by the other great lawyers, made an eloquent and argumentative speech against Burgoyne's resolutions, representing that they were founded in envy and illiberality, narrow, pointed at individuals, and not at that future reformation of our management of Indian affairs which ought to have been the grand object of the committee's inquiry; and that, above all, the evidence on which some of the facts rested was indecisive and defective, and the conclusions drawn from other facts erroneous and unjust as far as concerned Lord Clive

* The three resolutions were—"I. That all acquisitions, made under the influence of a military force, or by treaty with foreign princes, do of right belong to the state; II. That to appropriate acquisitions so made to the private emolument of persons intrusted with any civil or military power of the state is illegal; III. That very great sums of money, and other valuable property have been acquired, in Bengal, from princes and others of that country, by persons intrusted with the military and civil powers of the state, by means of such powers; which sums of money and valuable property have been appropriated to the private use of such persons."

* While Clive was on his last voyage from Calcutta—on the 18th of March, 1767—it was moved in a general court that the important services rendered to the country by Lord Clive merited a general acknowledgment and return, and that a grant to his lordship and his personal representatives, of an additional term in the jaghire of ten years, commencing from the termination of his lordship's present rights therein, would be a proper acknowledgment and return for such important services. This was carried by 456 against 264; and on the 24th of the same month the grant for ten years was made and declared.

† According to the account in the Parliamentary History, these last words were the whole speech that Clive made on this occasion. When he rose, it is stated, immediately after Wedderburn sate down, Mr. Ongley rose at the same time, and exclaimed that the noble lord was a long speech-maker, and perhaps the House might have another speech of two hours and twenty minutes; upon which Clive assured the House that he should trouble them not five minutes—and then delivered the few sentences quoted in the text.

personally and without the council. Thurlow, who is said to have been previously consulted, and to have recommended the spoliatory process as a good means of making up part of the deficiencies in the Leadenhall-street treasury, replied as a lawyer to Wedderburn; and in the end Burgoyne's resolutions were carried without a division. Just one week after this—on the 17th of May,* 1773—Burgoyne followed up his successes by pointing his charges directly against Clive. He protested that he wished not to plunder or impoverish his lordship; yet nothing was so clear as that he must reduce him to poverty as well as disgrace, if he could command the majorities which had hitherto gone along with him. After deploring the inordinate and sinful appetite for money which had shown itself of late, and the national disgrace brought upon us by acts of plunder and injustice in the East, Burgoyne re-affirmed the principle—a principle which had never been admitted by any one Englishman in India from the commencement of our intercourse down to the time of Clive's last administration, when he manfully enforced the new order of the company to that effect—that no civil or military servant, in treating with a foreign prince or state, could lawfully bargain for or acquire property for himself. Thus the donation at Moorshedabad was to be annulled, thus the jaghire was to be made void! But it entered not into Burgoyne's law or morality, or into the notions of any of them, that the money and rents ought to be restored, or the right of the nabob to give them questioned. With a boldness which must have astonished some men in the House acquainted with the real state of the case, the orator proclaimed that Suraj-u-Dowlah's treaties merited confidence, and would have given to the English in the country all the security that was requisite, and condemned Clive's attack on the French at Chandernagore, and insisted that his capture of that place was a breach of neutrality, a breach of treaty, and an act of gross injustice and provocation to the nabob, forgetting that in that very treaty Suraj-u-Dowlah contracted an alliance offensive and defensive with the English, engaging to consider their enemies as his own; and that, before the attack on Chandernagore, the daring rhetoric, not of Clive, but of Admiral Watson had obtained the shuffling nabob's assent. We were at open war with the French when Chandernagore was attacked, so that that question had merely reference to the sovereign rights of the nabob: we were at peace—at least in Europe—with the Dutch, when they sent their armament up the Hooghly; but Burgoyne, not feeling himself called upon in the working out of his plan of attack to refine upon international law, acknowledged that Lord Clive in the Dutch affair had shown perfect magnanimity and disinterestedness. But everything that happened after that event and during Clive's five years' absence in England was laid to his charge. The dethronement of Meer Jaffier, which Clive would never have permitted if he had been in the country, the setting up of Meer Cossim, and then the dethroning Meer Cossim and the setting up again of Meer Jaffier,—all the blunders or worse of Governor Vansittart, all the doings and undoings, the ravellings and unravellings, the malversations and oppressions of that council which Clive put down, in spite of Mr. Johnstone and of every cabal and opposition, were laid to his charge. Nay, more, he was to bear the blame of those very offences, and at the same time to be punished for having corrected the offenders without—as was said—a sufficient attention to the delicacies and considerations of the English law, which would have been about as applicable to the case as the British constitution would have been suitable to the atmosphere of Moorshedabad or Delhi. Burgoyne, acknowledging that he was happy and proud to be esteemed the friend of Governor Johnstone, the relative of one whose name had been mixed up in these transactions, declared that this should have no influence on his judgment—that he would not colour and conceal the conduct of that council, which he held to be unjustifiable—but then the orator, who had set all the ordinary rules of evidence at defiance in England, condemned Clive for the

* The Parl. Hist. says, on the 19th.

mode in which he had procured evidence in Bengal, compared his proceedings to those of the Inquisition, and called the letter written by Clive and the select committee acting with him, which contained the details of the delinquencies of Mr. Johnstone and his colleagues, an "infamous letter." Burgoyne concluded by moving the following resolution:—"That it appears to this House that the Right Honourable Robert Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey, &c., about the time of the deposition of Suraj-u-Dowlah, and the establishment of Meer Jaffier on the musnud, through the influence of the powers with which he was intrusted as a member of the select committee and commander-in-chief of the British forces, did obtain and possess himself of two lacs of rupees as commander-in-chief, a further sum of two lacs and 80,000 rupees, as member of the select committee, and a further sum of sixteen lacs or more under the denomination of a private donation; which sums, amounting together to twenty-six lacs and 80,000 rupees, were of the value, in English money, of 234,000*l.*; and that, in so doing, the said Robert Lord Clive abused the power with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public, and to the dishonour and detriment of the state."—Wedderburn again took an active part in the debate, strenuously opposing the motion on grounds both of law and equity. He said that the House was in danger of being led to commit rashly and inconsiderately an act of crying injustice against one of the most illustrious men of the age. He argued that the acceptance of presents by Clive was justifiable by the ancient laws and usages of India; that there was no law, order, or by-rule of the company prohibiting their servants from accepting them; and that to adopt the present resolution would be to condemn his lordship upon an *ex post facto* law. He treated the select committee with very little respect; said that the evidence they had gone upon was of the most unsatisfactory kind, that their report was necessarily a prejudiced one, and that for the House to proceed upon it would be an act of flagrant injustice. Mr. Rose Fuller spoke quite as freely of the select committee and its performances, declaring, as of his own knowledge, that the latter part of their report was undoubtedly not true. Lord North, in delivering a commonplace remark about the equality of justice, and the propriety of punishing great and splendid as well as mean and paltry offenders, hinted that it was very necessary to sift and examine the evidence. In the course of the debate Clive once more spoke for himself, and with the same uncompromising, unconciliating tone as on the previous occasions. He said, "After rendering my country the service which I think I may, without any degree of vanity, claim the merit of, and after having nearly exhausted a life full of employment for the public welfare and the particular benefit of the East India Company, I little thought that such transactions would have agitated the minds of my countrymen in proceedings like the present, tending to deprive me not only of my property and the fortune which I have fairly acquired, but of that which I hold more dear to me—my honour and reputation." He pointed out ably and clearly the discrepancies and inaccuracies in the reports, justified his whole conduct, civil and political, as open and undisguised, legal and above blame. He read extracts from his correspondence with Meer Jaffier and the India House, and finally the letter of the court of directors, which contained their full approbation of his proceedings. He observed that, trained in the school of war and politics as he had been for twenty years, he was now improving in the school of philosophy, and, if patience was a virtue, he had no doubt of soon being very virtuous indeed. But in reality this long-enduring patience was foreign to his nature, and was incompatible with his present state of bodily suffering. Always quick and susceptible, he had become morbidly sensitive and irritable, from the continuance of mental torture and bodily disease, in reciprocal action and reaction. The insults he had received from the select committee had gone through him like an Indian arrow, and as he spoke he seemed to show the barb with the poison and his heart's blood upon it. "I have served my country," said he, "and the

company faithfully; and, had it been my fortune to be employed by the crown, I should not have been in the situation I am in at present; I should have been differently rewarded: no retrospect would have been had to sixteen years past, and I should not have been forced to plead for what is dearer than life—my reputation. My situation has not been an easy one for these twelve months past; and, though my conscience never could accuse me, yet I felt for my friends, who were involved in the same censure as myself. Not a stone has been left unturned where the least probability could arise of discovering something of a criminal nature against me. The two committees seem to have bent the whole of their inquiries to the conduct of their humble servant the Baron of Plassey, and I have been examined by the select committee more like a sheep-stealer than a member of this House."* After making some bitter reflections on the persevering animosity and unfair proceedings of the deputy-chairman of the India Company (Sullivan), and condemning some portions of the new ministerial regulations for India, he spoke again on the subject of presents. He was firmly of opinion that, as for presents, in honourable cases it was not dishonourable to receive them—they were only dishonourable or improper in dishonourable cases—they had been received uninterruptedly for the space of 150 years, and by men who sat in the direction or held high places in the company's service or in the king's service—they were a lawful part of the social system of the East. "In the early part of my life," he continued, "my labours were without emolument or laurels; and I hope this House will not think that I ought not to be rewarded for my services to my country in the latter part of it. When I was first employed by the company their affairs abroad were in a condition much to be lamented. Misfortunes attended them in every part of their settlements, and the nabobs looked with a jealous eye upon the small privileges and possessions they then enjoyed; though small, in danger every day of being wrested from them. Their fears and weakness were surrounded by dangers on every side. In this critical situation it pleased God to make me the instrument of their deliverance." * With a proper and almost unavoidable compliment to the known good nature and humanity of Lord North, he said he was sure that, if that noble lord had foreseen the dreadful consequences that would attend them, he would never have consented to the passing of the three previous resolutions. He continued—"I cannot say that I rest easy when I find by those extensive resolutions that all I have in the world is confiscated, and that no man will now take my security for a shilling. These are dreadful apprehensions to remain under; and I cannot look upon myself but as a bankrupt. I have not anything left that I can call my own, except my paternal fortune of 500*l.* per annum, and which has been in my family for ages past." After some debate, further consideration of the motion was deferred till Friday the 21st. On that day the active Burgoyne moved that certain witnesses should then be examined. The examination was ordered, and Clive's own evidence before the committee was read; upon which his lordship said a few words, concluding with—"Take my fortune, but save my honour,"—and then retired from the House. Burgoyne's triumphant course stopped here: the House would not follow him from generalities to special facts and to individuals; would not upon loose and defective and for the most part *ex parte* evidence, find a distinguished man guilty, and then apply to him an *ex post facto* law. There was a spontaneous reaction in favour of Clive, a reaction ap-

* This, according to the Parl. Hist., is part of a speech which Clive delivered on the 3rd of May, in the debate on Lord North's motion for leave to bring in his bill for the better management of the affairs of the East India Company.

* He maintained that Suraj-u-Dowlah's dethronement was a necessary and lawful measure of self-defence; and that Omichund after all was only entangled in the meshes of the intrigue and treachery which he himself had woven. He showed—what we have before explained—that Admiral Watson had thoroughly approved of that revolution, and of the means by which it was obtained; and he read the letter signed by Watson, in common with the rest of the council at Calcutta, to that effect.

parently not explicable by any of the then ordinary rules of parliamentary management and manœuvre. There were no doubt hidden springs or calculated motives which had no reference to abstract notions of guilt or innocence, or to any sympathy or generous feeling; yet collectively the House appears to have been actuated by the conviction that the persecution was a malicious and most interested one; that the accusers of the hero of Plassey would never have raised a voice or a whisper against him if he had adapted himself to their views, instead of opposing them; that his conduct indeed was not free from faults, nor, perhaps, even from some shade of political crime; but that his position in India, unprecedented and impossible to have been provided for by any laws or rules, had been one of the most difficult in which a subject had ever been placed, and his temptations the greatest to which an Englishman had ever been exposed. And, when not dinned by the flourishes of oratory. No doubt many on both sides of that House felt that the ruling passion of the day was the *auri sacra fames*, and that Clive was a prodigy of abstinence and moderation. There was also another consideration: in the very highest flourishes of that oratory, in all that virtuous indignation expressed in well-rounded and sonorous periods, there was not a hint dropped of the propriety or possibility of restoring the splendid fruits of those crimes, or of those things which were called crimes, and which, notwithstanding the temporary embarrassment of the company, had mainly tended to double within a few years the annual exports of goods from England to India, and nearly to double the tonnage of our shipping employed in that trade. "I had the mortification," says a cool listener to these long debates, "to hear the transactions in India for the last sixteen years treated, without distinction, as a disgrace to this nation, but without the smallest idea of restoring to the injured natives of India the territories and revenues said to have been so unjustly acquired." *

* MS. notes, as cited by Sir John Malcolm, Life of Clive.

This consideration ran contrary to any indulgence in strict abstract principles of right and wrong: it called the mind rather to reflect upon what conquests have been, are, and ever must be. Whatever were the mingled considerations, feelings, and motives of the members of the House of Commons, when the question itself came on, and the direct charges against Clive were before them, their march was quick and decisive. Mr. Stanley moved that the words about abuse of powers, evil example, dishonour, &c., should be omitted; Mr. R. Fuller seconded the motion, and then proposed that other criminatory epithets should be struck out from Burgoyne's resolution. The motion was then put to the House in a form as meek and inoffensive as a sucking dove—that is to say, it merely specified that the Right Honourable Robert Lord Clive, &c., had, about the time of the deposition of Suraj-u-Dowlah and the establishment of Meer Jaffier, obtained, at various times, as commander-in-chief and member of the select committee, rupees amounting in English money to 234,000*l*. "On this point," says the account in the Annual Register, "the grand struggle was made. Those who speculate observed an extraordinary division of those who, on all other occasions, acted together. The minister declared in favour of the words of censure on Lord Clive, and divided in the minority. The attorney-general was a principal in the attack; the solicitor-general managed the defence. The courtiers went different ways. The most considerable part of the opposition supported Lord Clive, though he had joined the administration and supported them in their proceedings against the company." In the end, the motion, as shortened and dulcified by Stanley and Fuller, was carried by a majority of sixty, the numbers being 155 against 95. Burgoyne then moved—"That Lord Clive did, in so doing, abuse the powers with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public;" but this motion was rejected.* By this time

* So says the Annual Register; but, according to the more detailed account in the Parliamentary History, Burgoyne's motion was *carried*,

it was near four o'clock in the morning: many members had gone home to bed, and some of those who remained were nodding on their seats—dreaming possibly of rupees and jaghires; but another and the last motion was made by Wedderburn—"That Robert Lord Clive did, at the same time, render great and meritorious services to this country;" and this passed in the affirmative. So shifting were the winds of parliament, and so sudden their changes from hot to cold. And thus terminated all these proceedings as far as Clive was concerned. But "the be all and the end all" was not there, nor could depend any further on resolutions, motions, and votes. "The Daring in War" had received his death-blow from orators' tongues, or, at the least, his mind and body had been so harassed for many months, and his cruel maladies so exacerbated, that there no longer remained a gleam of health, or hope, or cheerfulness. He had been acquitted—he had been applauded; some of the highest in the land and some of the most liberal and intellectual abroad—men like Voltaire, who had the right of genius to be the real dispensers of fame—testified their admiration and admired him the more for the ordeal he had gone through; but he could not take these flattering unctions to his soul, he brooded over the indignity of having been accused, charged in the eyes of the whole world, not only with horrible crimes, but with mean petty vices most hateful and maddening to his pride.* He sought some alleviation to his sufferings in a visit to Bath as soon as parliament rose, and then in a short excursion on the Continent; but he returned worse than he went. His liver was entirely deranged, his attacks of bile were frequent and dreadful; he suffered the excruciating agonies of gall-stones, and he had long had recourse to the dangerous aid of opium, which in many cases maddens or depresses in the morning more than it soothes or exhilarates at night. He had begun the use of the drug when he first went to India, and apparently had never abandoned it, but, like all opium-eaters, had gone on increasing his dose. He had always been subject to dreadful fits of depression. In one of these, when cooped up in Fort St. George a poor moody lad, he twice attempted to destroy himself, and twice the pistol missed fire; upon which, it is added, he examined the pistol, saw that it was really well loaded, and then threw it from him with an exclamation that he must certainly be destined for something great or extraordinary. In the month of November of the year which followed his acquittal by the Commons (1774), being at his splendid town mansion in Berkeley-square, he had a violent access of his most painful malady. On the 21st and 22nd he endured extreme agony, and had recourse for relief to additionally powerful doses of laudanum: the drug did not soothe, and a paroxysm of irritability and impatience was added to the paroxysm of the disease: in the course of the 22nd he died by his own hand. He had only just completed his forty-ninth year. If ever there was a case where suicide could be accounted for by an accumulation of causes, it was this; but the world rounded off its story by assuming and insisting that Clive had fallen a victim to a guilty conscience and to the just vengeance of God. And this

after the previous question, moved by Mr. Stanley, had been negatived without a division.

* Voltaire expressed a desire to Dr. John Moore, the well-known author, and father of General Sir John Moore, to obtain the perusal of the most important papers connected with Indian affairs, with a view to celebrate the great deeds which had been done in that part of the world.—See *Letter from Wedderburn to Clive in Sir John Malcolm's Life.*

It appears to have been during the parliamentary inquiry into his conduct, or very shortly after its termination, that overtures were made to Lord Clive to accept of the chief command in America, then on the verge or rather within the verge of the revolution. Clive had declared, with his usual sagacity, at the very beginning of these troubles, that they must end sooner or later in the independence of America. But the plea of bad health was the excuse he is said to have proffered. "Had he," it has been said, "still been what he was when he raised the siege of Patna and annihilated the Dutch army and navy at the mouth of the Ganges, it is not improbable that the resistance of the colonies would have been put down, and that the inevitable separation would have been deferred for a few years."—*Mr. Macaulay in Edin. Rev.* The wasted shadow, the mere ghost of the defender of Arcot and hero of Plassey, would assuredly have done more than the Howes, Burgoynes, and Clintons.

remained for years not merely the tale of the vulgar and uninformed, but the opinion of many preachers and moral philosophers of the highest pretensions; and some physicians who ventured to doubt whether, if a single cause were to be assigned for the deplorable act, Clive's self-destruction had not proceeded rather from a diseased liver than from a diseased conscience, were treated as impious scoffers or downright atheists. Dr. Johnson, who might have arrived nearer to the truth by reflecting on the circumstances of his own life and unfortunate physical constitution, on his own morbid sensibility and the melancholy which had filled many of his hours with horror, though he had no blood or cruelty or serious crime upon his conscience, gave his sanction to the damning and unjust rumour by saying that Lord Clive, loaded with wealth and honours, had acquired his fortune by such crimes that his consciousness of them impelled him to cut his own throat!* This belief became a tradition and a part of the faith of the land; and it is only at a very recent date that the facts of the case have been put in their proper light, and that justice has been done to the genius and personal character of Clive. In the words of one who has done much to clear his fame—"Such men should be judged by their contemporaries as they will be judged by posterity. Their bad actions ought not, indeed, to be called good; but their good and bad actions ought to be fairly weighed; and if, on the whole, the good preponderate, the sentence ought to be one, not merely of acquittal, but of approbation. Not a single great ruler in history can be absolved by a judge who fixes his eye inexorably on one or two unjustifiable acts."*

* "It is generally understood that he put a period to his existence by shooting himself through the head."—*Brayley's London and Middlesex*, 737. Every reader of Johnson must feel that there is a strong distinction to be drawn between his opinions as set down deliberately in his writings and in the quiet of his study and his opinions as delivered in conversation, where he indulged in paradox and contradiction—his usual rule, indeed, being to oppose and contradict everything advanced by another. The opinions he delivered about Clive were conversational ones. Dr Robertson, the Scottish historian, chanced one evening, over a dinner-table, to deliver an encomium upon the hero of Plassey, whom he described as one of the strongest-minded men that ever lived. This alone was enough to call up the incurable spirit of contradiction in the "Great Moralist," who, in spite of some pretty expressions, had small affection for the historian, or for his country or his politics, and who probably was the less careful of speaking strongly against Clive, as Clive was a moderate Whig. To Robertson's eulogium Johnson rejoined—"Yet this man cut his own throat:" and he then spoke in a facetious strain about the King of Prussia and bottles of wine, and the necessity of a man being great in great things, and elegant in little things. This table-talk is not to be taken for more than table-talk: the imputation of bad taste for making wit out of so sad a catastrophe, which was then a recent event, may rest upon Johnson; but it would be unjust to him to take it as his deliberate opinion on the case of Clive. The next time he is reported speaking of Clive was late one night, "after Mrs. Thrale was gone to bed," when Boswell was boring him with moral commonplaces, and when he was contradicting at his roundest rate, and using arguments which would scare and terrify our modern proprieties; and this was the time and the occasion on which he attributed Clive's suicide to a guilty conscience! *Valeat tantum.* The spirit of love and charity that was in him, his strength and his weaknesses, his knowledge and experience, would have dictated a very different opinion in places where there was no Robertson to contradict or Boswell to puzzle, and no auditors to be excited and astonished by his conversational powers.

* Mr. Macaulay.

# CHAPTER XIV.

## RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF HASTINGS'S CONDUCT.

WARREN HASTINGS, who extended and consolidated the empire which Clive had called into existence, and whose Indian career ended in a prosecution more famous and more formal than that to which his lordship was subjected, began his administration at Calcutta under every possible disadvantage. The famine to which more than one allusion has been made, occurred in 1770, under the government of Mr. Cartier, and only a few months before Hastings succeeded him. It was a tremendous visitation; the natives, and above all the Hindu portion of them, who, on religious grounds, make little or no use of animal food, perished by hundreds and by thousands, and it was calculated that, in all, from one-fourth to one-third of the teeming population of Bengal was swept away. In the summer of 1769 the rains had failed; hence the earth was parched up, the tanks for the purposes of irrigation became empty, and the rivers shrank within their beds. The same natural causes had always been attended by the same dreadful consequences, and wide-wasting dearths were frequent in India long before Vasco de Gama doubled the Cape or the name of the English was known. But natural causes did not satisfy the popular mind in England, where it was rumoured that the company's servants had created the famine by buying up all the rice of the country, and by refusing to sell it except at ten or twelve times the price at which they had bought it. "These charges," says Mr. Macaulay, "we believe to have been utterly unfounded. That servants of the company had ventured, since Clive's departure, to deal in rice, is probable. That, if they dealt in rice, they must have gained by the scarcity is certain. But there is no reason for thinking that they either produced or aggravated an evil which physical causes sufficiently explain. The outcry which was raised against them on this occasion was, we suspect, as absurd as the imputations which, in times of dearth at home, were once thrown by statesmen and judges, and are still thrown by two or three old women, on the corn-factors."†

A short time before the breaking out of the famine Syef-al-Dowla, the son and successor of Meer Jaffier, died of the small-pox; and his brother, Muharek-al-Dowla, a boy, was appointed to the musnud. Not a few had been inclined to apply to Syef the process of rapid curtailment and reduction which Regan applies to the household of old King Lear; and it appears to have been pretty generally thought that too much money was [illegible] upon a merely nominal nabob, a puppet, a man of straw—for so had Syef-al-Dowla been designated by a leading member in the Calcutta government. But as soon as the magnates in Leadenhall-street knew that Syef was dead [illegible] sent out orders for making retrenchments on the allowance of his young brother. "We cannot," said the directors, "but observe with astonishment that an event of so much importance as the death of the Nabob Syef-al-Dowla, and the establishment of a successor in so great a degree of nonage, should not have been attended with those advantages for the company which such a circumstance offered to your view. Convinced as we are that an allowance of sixteen lacs per annum will be sufficient for the support of the nabob's state and rank while a minor, we must consider every addition thereto as so much to be wasted on a herd of parasites and

† Art. on Life of Clive.

sycophants, who will continually surround him; or at least be hoarded up—a consequence still more pernicious to the company. You are, therefore, during the nonage of the nabob, to reduce his annual stipend to sixteen lacs of rupees."

It fell to Mr. Hastings to carry these orders into execution, and he was afterwards censured and condemned as if the acts had originated with himself. The saving made, however much it may have improved the morals of the young nabob's court, had no visible effect on the treasury at Calcutta, and Hastings was left to struggle through all the perplexities and cares resulting from an empty exchequer and a daily increasing debt, while every ship, every dispatch from his masters, brought demands for money—money—money. Mohammed Reza Khan, a Mussulman, who had been appointed by English influence in opposition to the Hindu Nuncomar to administer not only the civil list or pension of the nabob, but also the revenues of all Bengal, was continued in office under the infant minor; but weighty reasons combined to induce the court of directors to deprive him of his profitable employments. In the first place, a general opinion had got abroad, and had been assiduously propagated by Nuncomar and other Hindus—who had long been intriguing for his places, and who had always considered a Mohammedan minister of finance a monstrous anomaly and encroachment on the rights by prescription of the Hindus to have the sole management of the revenue and all money-matters—that Mohammed Reza Khan must have acquired enormous wealth during the years in which the nabob's thirty-two lacs, and all the lacs raised in Bengal by taxes, duties, privileges, &c., had passed through his hands. As no Indian minister under his circumstances had been honest, it became a matter of course to accuse him of dishonesty and rapacity; and there were few customs so ancient in the East, or recommended by so many precedents, as that of making men in office disgorge all that they had swallowed, just at the moment of repletion. "When the lemon is fullest and ripest," said a Turkish despot, "I suck it and then throw away the rind." "I treat my Hindu ministers of finance," said an Indian despot, "like sponges. I give them time to absorb all that they can contain, then I press the matter out of them, and leave them as dry as a burnt stick." Adages of the same kind are common all over the East. In the second place, suspicions were entertained—and they also were suggested by Nuncomar—that Mohammed Reza Khan, who had always been very popular, was becoming a great deal too powerful, and was entertaining the idea of turning his great power against the English. To shake his popularity and the esteem in which he had been held by the poorer classes of the people, as well Hindus as Mohammedans, the Nuncomar faction had laid to his charge every act of oppression, every misfortune and calamity that had happened in the country, and had accused him generally of cruelty and tyranny towards the poor. The terrible famine gave them the opportunity of being more specific, and they accused Mohammed Reza Khan—as pamphleteers, poets, and parliament orators in England accused the servants of the company—of having increased the calamities of the poor during the height of the famine by monopoly of rice and other necessaries of life.

This charge, with all the other hints and suspicions, had been transmitted to Leadenhall-street chiefly through the active agency of one Huzzeramul, a creature of Nuncomar, who had an extensive acquaintance among the servants of the company. Nuncomar, indeed, by presents and promises, had made himself a strong party in Calcutta, and some of this party could influence the votes and opinions of some members of the court of directors. The embarrassments of the company quickened their cupidity, their cupidity countenanced their suspicion, and both together made them ready and eager recipients of the worst charges that could be brought against Mohammed Reza Khan, whose ruin was forthwith determined upon. As early as the 28th of August, 1771, the secret committee wrote to Warren Hastings:—"By our general orders you will be informed of the reasons we have to be dissatisfied with the administration of Mohammed Reza Khan,

and will perceive the expediency of our divesting him of the rank and influence he holds as naib dewan of the kingdom of Bengal. But, though we have declared our resolution in this respect to our president and council, yet, as the measures to be taken in consequence thereof might be defeated by that minister, and all inquiry into his conduct rendered ineffectual, were he to have *any previous intimation* of our design, we, the secret committee, having the most perfect confidence in your judgment, prudence, and integrity, have thought proper to intrust to your especial care the execution of those measures which alone can render the naib's conduct subject to the effects of a full inquiry, and secure that retribution which may be due." They proceeded to express their fear of an open arrest, and their hope that the ingenuity of Hastings would devise some means of taking Mohammed Reza Khan unawares, and of making sure of his person, without previously exciting "the resentment and revenge which he might conceive on the knowledge of the secret committee's intentions." Nor was the minister to be the only prisoner: Hastings was directed and enjoined, immediately on the receipt of this letter, to take measures and issue his *private orders* for securing "the person of Mohammed Reza Khan, together with his whole family and his known partisans and adherents;" and to bring them all down quietly to Calcutta by such means as his prudence should suggest. And the secret committee further declared it to be—in a style royal or imperial—their "pleasure and command" that none of these persons should be liberated until the minister should have exculpated himself and have made full restitution of all sums which he might have appropriated to his own use, either from the public revenues or the nabob's stipends; and until he should also have satisfied the claims of all such persons as might have suffered by any act of injustice or oppression committed while he was in office. Still further they instructed Hastings "sedulously to endeavour to penetrate into the most *hidden parts* of his administration," and "discover the reality of the several facts with which he was charged, or the justness of the suspicions they (the secret committee) had of his conduct." These, indeed, were instructions worthy of the so-called Holy Office—these duties expected at the hands of Hastings were worthy of an officer or familiar of the Inquisition. But, like the orders of the inquisitor-general, they were imperative, and left no choice to their paid servant, which Hastings was, but implicit obedience or disgrace and dismissal. Continuing in the same strain, the secret committee said, "We cannot forbear recommending to you to avail yourself of the intelligence which Nuncomar may be able to give respecting the naib's administration; and, *while the envy which Nuncomar is supposed to bear this minister may prompt him to a ready communication of all proceedings which have come to his knowledge, we are persuaded that no scrutable part of the naib's conduct can have escaped the watchful eye of his jealous and penetrating rival.* Hence we cannot doubt but that the abilities and disposition of Nuncomar may be successfully employed in the investigation of Mohammed Reza Khan's administration." The secret committee knew Nuncomar to be a liar and a scoundrel, and therefore it was that they expected scoundrel's work from him. They gave Hastings no hint to be on his guard against his lies and malice—that was not their cue, for they wanted evidence, and cared not of what kind—but they warned Hastings not to give the villain too much for his services, or not to promise him the office of naib dewan.

As, however, they could not expect that profoundly selfish Hindu to perform the work of iniquity without some of its wages, the secret committee told Hastings that, though they were not disposed to delegate any power or influence to Nuncomar, he might yield him "such encouragement and reward as his trouble and the extent of his services might deserve." There had been nothing open, and there was to be nothing open in these transactions. The charge about starving the people, which would have been at the head of this long letter if the secret committee had had other feelings and motives, was brought in, almost as a postscript, at

y end of the epistle. Their fears their contrivances and subterfuges ght find some excuse if Mohammed Reza Khan had been as powerful as Suraj-u-Dowlah or Meer Cossim; but the English authority was established and dreaded throughout Bengal, and the naib was in reality so weak that a single company of sepoys might at any time have seized him and carried him down to Calcutta without opposition and without any necessity of dark schemes and stratagems. It might be somewhat different farther off, at Patna; but such appears to have been the case at Moorshedabad, where Mohammed Reza Khan was residing.

The charge or charges thus confidentially committed to Hastings he was to keep a profound secret from his colleagues in India; and he was told that the company did him high honour by the separate trust thus reposed in him. If he rendered the signal and essential services expected of him he would prove himself worthy of their choice, and of presiding in the administration of the government of Bengal—or so said his "loving friends," the secret committee sitting in Leadenhall-street. Now [illegible] Hastings had several strong reasons for feeling embarrassed at the [illegible] of [illegible]veigling, imprisoning, and ruining Mohammed Reza Khan, and courting the confidence and intimacy of Nuncomar: he had formerly concurred in opinion with Clive that Mohammed Reza Khan was the best man in the country and Nuncomar the worst, and, if he had not been a member of the council which appointed the former to his high offices, and which received presents on that account to the amount of twenty lacs of rupees, he had on many occasions, both in England and in India, personally and by means of letters, testified his esteem for the Mohammedan, and his thorough detestation of the Hindu.* Moreover Nuncomar had, long ago, in the days of Suraj-u-Dowlah and Meer Jaffier, rendered himself peculiarly odious to the English at Calcutta, who, when their time of power and vengeance arrived, had treated him as a felon, keeping him some time a prisoner in Fort William. During the administration of Vansittart, the directors, convinced by the frequent representations of Hastings, had declared their conviction that Nuncomar was capable of forgery and all other frauds and crimes, and must be kept under a constant surveillance.* Nevertheless Hastings proceeded with the task set down for him. "As your commands," says he in a letter to the secret committee, "were peremptory, and addressed to myself alone, I carefully concealed them from every person except Mr. Middleton, whose assistance was necessary for their execution, until I was informed by him that Mohammed Reza Khan was actually in arrest, and on his way to Calcutta. To have consulted the board on a point on which your authoritative commands had left me without a choice, or to have desired their assistance when I had sufficient power to act without it, would have been equally improper. But I will confess that there were other cogent reasons for this reserve. I was yet but a stranger to the characters and dispositions of the members of your administration. I knew that Mohammed Reza Khan had enjoyed the sovereignty of this province for seven

* He had even accused Nuncomar of plotting against him, and seeking his life or his absolute ruin. "From the year 1759," said he in one of his letters, "to the time when I left Bengal in 1764, I was engaged in a continued opposition to the interests and designs of that man, because I judged him to be adverse to the welfare of my employers, and I had received sufficient indications of his ill will to myself."

* "From the whole of your proceedings with respect to Nuncomar," wrote the directors, "there seems to be no doubt of his endeavouring by forgery and false accusations to ruin Ram Churn; that he has been guilty of carrying on correspondence with the country powers hurtful to the company's interests, and instrumental in conveying letters between the shazada and the French governor-general of Pondicherry. In short it appears he is of that wicked and turbulent disposition that no harmony can subsist in society where he has the opportunity of interfering. We therefore most readily concur with you, that Nuncomar is a person improper to be trusted with his liberty in our settlements, and capable of doing mischief if he is permitted to go out of the province, either to the northward or to the Deccan. We shall therefore depend upon your keeping such a watch over all his actions as may be the means of preventing his disturbing the quiet of the public, or injuring individuals for the future."—*Letter to the President and Council, dated 22nd February, 1764.*

years past, had possessed an allowed annual stipend of nine lacs of rupees, the uncontrolled disposal of thirty-two lacs intrusted to him for the use of the nabob, the absolute command of every branch of the nizamut, and the chief authority in the dewannee. To speak more plainly, he was in everything but the name the nizam of the province, and in real authority more than the nizam. I could not suppose him so inattentive to his own security, nor so ill versed in the maxims of Eastern policy, as to have neglected the due means of establishing an interest with such of the company's agents as by actual authority or by representation to the honourable company might be able to promote or obstruct his views. I chose therefore to avoid the risk of an opposition, to put the matter beyond dispute, and then to record what I had done. The same reflections occurred to me when I proposed to intrust Mr. Middleton with the execution of your commands, which might with more certainty have been effected by an order to the commanding officer of the brigade stationed at Burrampoor. But this would have been productive of much disturbance. I was convinced that I might securely rely on Mr. Middleton, and his behaviour justified that confidence." Hastings did not mention how the naib had been inveigled into captivity, but said merely "Mohammed Reza Khan was brought without delay to Calcutta, where he has been detained ever since in an easy confinement." In the same paragraph of his letter he said that he had judged it advisable and consistent with the tenor of their commands to cause also Rajah Shitab Roy to be arrested and brought down to Calcutta. This Shitab Roy had been naib dewan at Patna, and had exercised in Bahar the same extensive authority that Mohammed Reza Khan had exercised in Bengal: he also had been appointed through the English interest, and, like the khan, had stood high in the estimation of his countrymen of both religions. Shitab Roy, who had more sensibility than is common among Indians, was deeply affected by his arrest, and seemed to pine away under "the easy confinement" to which he was subjected. In his case as in that of the khan the evidence of personal rivals and bitter enemies was sought for.

To meet some present murmurs raised by his colleagues, and to anticipate and defend himself against any future blame, Hastings declared that in all that he had done he had been solely guided by the several instructions of the secret committee of the court of directors. "To the service of the company," said he in one of his letters, "and to your commands, I have sacrificed my own feelings, and have combated those of others joined with me in the administration of your affairs. I claim your approbation of what I have done, not as a recompense of integrity, but as the confirmation of the authority which you have been pleased to confide in me, and of your own which is involved in it." It appears that the members of the special committee at Calcutta strongly opposed some of these measures, while they were merely points of debate, but afterwards bowed to the sanction of the council, and concurred with Hastings and co-operated in the execution of them, as if they had never dissented. But it was found easier work to arrest the two naib dewans than to bring them to trial; and months and seasons elapsed before Mohammed Reza Khan and Shitab Roy knew specifically of what they were accused. Before ordering their arrest the company had come to the determination that, innocent or guilty, they should be the last naib dewans, and that, as a completion of the company's authority, the departments of revenue and finance, together with the department of law and justice, should be managed no longer, for them, by natives, but by their own English servants. Mohammed Reza Khan's influence continued for some time to prevail generally throughout Bengal; in the nabob's household, and at Moorshedabad, the capital, it seemed scarcely affected by his disgrace and imprisonment: his favour was still courted and his anger dreaded: his agents, friends, and dependants filled every office of the dewannee and nizamut. But Hastings attacked all parts of the system at once:—the nabob's household was reformed, or at least revolutionized

and changed; leading men in the capital were won over to the new system; the treasury and the courts of law were swept clean of their old occupants; and the influence of the last naib dewan of Bengal was completely broken by removing all his dependants, and placing the secondary direction of affairs in the hands of the most powerful or active of his enemies, that is to say, the agents and creatures of Nuncomar.*

Ahteram-ul-Dowlah, uncle of the young nabob, and the eldest existing male of the family, claimed or petitioned for the vacant offices of naib, which would have constituted him chief minister and guardian of his young nephew: but one so near the musnud might make plots and rebellions to get possession of it for himself; he was a man of mature years, and neither without a party nor without a certain portion of spirit and ability; and, as an inevitable deduction, Hastings concluded that Ahteram-ul-Dowlah must have no place or authority in the remodelled court.† A woman, it was considered, would be less troublesome, or at least less dangerous, and there seemed besides plausible reasons for intrusting the care of the son to his natural guardian, his own mother. Accordingly Munny Begum or Minnee Begum, a second wife, or rather a concubine, of Meer Jaffier, who had been originally a dancing-girl, was preferred to the place. The council of Calcutta thus explained and justified the nomination in one of their minutes:—"We know no person so fit for the trust of guardian to the nabob as the widow of the late nabob Meer Jaffier Ali Khan, Minnee Begum; her rank may give her a claim to this pre-eminence without hazard to our own policy; nor will it be found incompatible with the rules prescribed to her sex by the laws and manners of her country, as her authority will be confined to the walls of the nabob's palace, and the (new) dewan will act, of course, in all cases in which she cannot personally appear."* The new dewan, who was to act in public where the lady could not appear, was Rajah Goordass, the son of Nuncomar. In a minute signed Warren Hastings, it is said—"The president proposes Rajah Goordass for the office of dewan to the nabob's household. The inveterate and rooted enmity which has long subsisted between Mohammed Reza Khan and Nuncomar, and the necessity of employing the vigilance and activity of so penetrating a rival to counteract the designs of Mohammed Reza Khan, and to eradicate that influence which he still retains in the government of this province, and more especially in the family of the nabob, *are the sole motives for this recommendation.*"

Goordass, of course, was to be strictly confined to the household, and to have nothing to do with the public revenues or any of the public business of Bengal; and even in the department of the household he was to be kept in check by the Begum, and to have but the partial management of only sixteen lacs of rupees, whereas his powerful predecessor, Mohammed Reza Khan, had had the sole management of

* Warren Hastings's own Letter to the secret committee.

† Hastings himself did not rate very high either the abilities or the ambition of Ahteram-ul-Dowlah; but he *thought* the following sufficient reasons for keeping him or any other man of the family at a distance:—"He is indeed a man of no *dangerous abilities*, or *apparent* ambition, but the father of a numerous family, who by his being brought so nigh to the musnud would have acquired a right of inheritance to the subahship; and if only one of his sons, who are all in the prime of life, should have raised his hopes to the succession, it would have been in his power at any time to remove the single obstacle which the nabob's life opposed to the advancement of his family. The guardian at least would have been the nizam while the minority lasted, and all the advantages which the company may hope to derive from it in the confirmation of their power would have been lost, or could only have been maintained by a contention hurtful to their rights, or by a violence yet more exceptionable. *The case would be much the same were any other man placed in that station.*"

* They add in their minute—"Great abilities are not to be expected in a zenana, but in these she is very far from being deficient; nor is any extraordinary understanding requisite for so limited an employ. She is said to have acquired a great ascendant over the spirit of the nabob, being the only person of whom he stands in any kind of awe; a circumstance highly necessary for fulfilling the chief part of her duty, in directing his education and conduct, which appear to have been hitherto much neglected."

thirty-two lacs in that department alone. Nothing it appears was to be feared from Goordass, who had no "dangerous abilities;" and his father, Nuncomar, was to be vigilantly watched, and not permitted to act for him except in conformity with the wishes and views of Warren Hastings and the interests of the company. At the same time Hastings considered that Nuncomar, satisfied with his son's promotion, would remain quiet or be active only in getting up charges against his old rival. There was, however, considerable opposition in the council at Calcutta to the nomination of Goordass, which was esteemed in effect the nomination of Nuncomar. To these objections Hastings replied, that it might be indeed unsafe to trust Nuncomar, but that, as he would hold no office, and would remain a subject of the company, it would be easy to remove him and his son also without éclat, or the least appearance of violence, whenever it should be proved or even *suspected* that he had abused the trust;—that it was not pretended that the abilities of Goordass could either administer the reduced stipend of the nabob with discretion, or root out the old power and influence of Mohammed Reza Khan—"his youth and inexperience would render him inadequate to these the real purposes of his appointment, but his father had all the abilities, perseverance, and temper, requisite for such ends, in a degree, perhaps, exceeding any man in Bengal;"—and finally, that Nuncomar would be subjected in all times and places to a surveillance that would prevent his doing mischief. "I still dislike him," said Hastings in a private letter, "although I countenance him and employ him. I had secret motives in addition to those which I assigned for the promotion of his son."*

The secret committees expressed their entire approbation of his conduct in this and in every other particular. "The use you intend making of Nuncomar," wrote the Machiavellis of Leadenhall-street, "is very proper, and it affords us great satisfaction to find that you could at once determine to suppress all personal feeling when the public welfare seemed to clash with your private sentiments relative to Nuncomar."* To arrange all these difficult matters, to settle the collection of the revenue and the young nabob's household, Hastings, attended by the special committee of Calcutta, made a tour in the provinces, and resided some time at Moorshedabad. The settlement of the household, and the endeavour to make a court that had been spending thirty-two lacs per annum rest satisfied with sixteen, appear to have been the most difficult part of the business, and to have called

* Letter to Josias Dupré, Esq.

* Among many other tirades which Hastings made at this period against Nuncomar, are the following:—"He stands convicted of treason against the company, while he was the servant of Meer Jaffier, and I helped to convict him. The man never was a favourite of mine, and was engaged in doing me many ill offices for seven years together. But I found him the only man who could enable me to fulfil the expectations of the company with respect to Mohammed Reza Khan; and I had other reasons which would fully justify me when I can make them known. For these and those I supported his son, who is to benefit by his abilities and influence, but the father is to be allowed no authority."—*Letter to Dupré.* "To the latter (the nomination of Goordass) I was indeed principally inclined by your commands. I hope it will appear that I have adopted almost the only expedient in which they could be exactly fulfilled. You directed that 'if the assistance and information of Nuncomar should be serviceable to me, I should yield him such encouragements and rewards as the trouble and extent of his services might deserve.' There is no doubt that he is capable of affording me great services by his information and advice; but it is on his abilities, and on the activity of his ambition and hatred to Mohammed Reza Khan, that I depend for investigating the conduct of the latter, and, by eradicating his influence, for confirming the authority which you have assumed in the administration of the affairs of this country. The reward which has been assigned him (through his son) will put it in his power to answer those expectations, and will be an encouragement to him to exert all his abilities for the accomplishment of them. *Had I not been guarded by the caution which you have been pleased to enjoin me, yet my own knowledge of the character of Nuncomar would have restrained me from yielding him any trust or authority which could prove detrimental to the company's interests.* He himself has no trust or authority, but in the ascendancy which he naturally possesses over his son. No attempt to abuse the favour which has been shown him can escape unnoticed.....The son is of a disposition very unlike the father, placid, gentle, and without disguise. *From him there can be no danger.*"—*Letter to the Secret Committee.*

most for the personal interference and exertions of the governor and president. It had been previously resolved in the nabob's council that he should solemnly protest against these sweeping changes, which would deprive him of the last semblance of sovereignty; that he should claim the administration of his own affairs, and upon the rejection of such claim abdicate the government and retire to Calcutta. There was, moreover, a fierce feud and jealousy between Minnee Begum and another Begum of the zenana; and the boy nabob was wholly in the hands of women and eunuchs. Yet Hastings overcame all these difficulties with great art and infinite manœuvring, but without the least appearance of violence or even of disrespect. It was impossible to dethrone a prince with more gentleness and politeness, or to deprive courtiers of half their gains with more courtesy. Not a single English soldier, not a sepoy, was called into action. "However," says Hastings, "by avoiding every appearance of violence, and by a proper address to the nabob's counsellors, he was easily induced, with a very good grace and without opposition, to give his assent to the new appointments, which were conferred in form in the presence of the committee. . . . . I had the honour some time afterwards to reconcile the two ladies, and to bring about a meeting between them; an event for which I claim some merit, although I do not imagine there is a grain of affection subsisting between them."* The dewannee, or public treasury, was removed to Calcutta and placed under English management; and thither also were carried the superior courts of justice. Hastings, quite jubilant, exclaimed—"By these arrangements the whole power and government of the province will centre in Calcutta, which may now be considered as the capital of Bengal. The establishment of the courts of justice in Calcutta is almost an act of injustice, the criminal judicature being a branch of the nizamut (*which the company had agreed to leave the nabob*); but it was so connected with the revenue, and the Mohammedan courts are so abominably venal, that it was *necessary:* it met with no opposition."*

It must be borne in mind that these transactions, together with many subsequent and important ones, took place while Warren Hastings was merely governor and president, not governor-general, and many months before the new constitution by act of parliament came into operation in India. Indeed it was the object of Hastings, and the constant order of his masters or employers, the court of directors, to do the work of reform or change by anticipation, so as to show that there was no need of the interference of parliament or of the ministry —an interference they considered as destructive of their rights and power.† In hastening the organization of the superior courts of justice at Calcutta, Hastings's only dread was that a new judicature and a new code of laws might be framing in England, upon principles diametrically opposite to his, which were, that the laws and forms established of old in the country should be renewed, with no other variation than such as was necessary to give them their due effect, and such as the people understood and were likely to be pleased with. He maintained that, if laws and regulations were made in the English parliament by gentlemen who knew nothing of India, though good lawyers in Westminster Hall, the operation of their code would be in part disastrous and in part impracticable. Hence he pursued his task with a degree of application and intelligence of which few men not bred to the legal profession would have been capable. "If," said he, "the lord chief

* Letter to Dupré.

* Letter to Dupré.

† Hastings clearly foresaw the high destinies of Calcutta. "By the translation of the treasury, by the exercise of the dewannee without an intermediate agent, by the present superintendency of the nabob's household, and by the establishment of the new courts of justice under the control of our own government, the authority of the company is fixed in this country without any possibility of a competition, and beyond the power of any but themselves to shake it. The nabob is a mere name, and the seat of government most effectually and visibly transferred from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, which I do not despair of seeing the first city in Asia, if I live and am supported but a few years longer."—*Letter to Mr. Sykes.*

justice and his judges should come amongst us with their institutes, the Lord have mercy upon us! We shall be in a complete state of confusion here, and we shall be cruelly mauled at home, especially if the parliament should lay hold on our code; for we have not a lawyer among us!" And, while he was codifying, erecting courts, and finding out men proper to fill them, he was also engaged in systematizing the revenue, establishing the new treasury, and finding men proper to put in it or in the important offices of district collectors; in devising means for placing both the internal trade of the country and the external trade of the company upon a better footing; in making reforms or alterations among all classes of the company's servants in India; and in preparing the trials of Mohammed Reza Khan and Rajah Shitab Roy, as he said himself, "without materials and without much hope of assistance; for, *On ne pend pas des gens qui ont un million dans leur poche.*"* As to the reforms among the servants of the company, he complained that he had received a dangerous mark of distinction in being alone intrusted with their execution, and that the effect was, his hand was against every man, and every man's against him! And to all these laborious and trying occupations were superadded the constant cares and anxieties arising out of the company's connexions with the Nabob of Oude and Shah Alum, and the encroachment of the Mahrattas, who occupied or overran for uncertain seasons the whole of the interior of India from Delhi to the frontiers of Oude, from the ghauts of the Carnatic to the ghauts behind Bombay.

After a long confinement, which certainly did not appear so "easy" to them as it did to the governor, Mohammed Reza Khan and Shitab Roy were brought to trial in Calcutta; and, although the court was of Hastings's own forming, and such extraordinary means had been adopted in the beginning to prove their guilt, they were both acquitted.† This seems the more strange, as not only Nuncomar, but hundreds of natives, always indifferent about false oaths, might, for considerations, have been made to swear whatsoever was wanted on the side of the prosecution.* It does not appear, however, that either the secret committee or the governor, who was acting under their peremptory orders, ever desired the death of these two ministers. They had probably discovered that their wealth was far less, or had been acquired by more legitimate means, than reported; and that the squeezing of the sponges would bring them more odium than money. They may also have been satisfied with discovering that the reports of their political power had been monstrously exaggerated; for Hastings had put them down, abolished their offices for ever, and changed the whole system of law, revenue, and finance without the slightest difficulty, and not only without difficulty, but, to all appearance, to the satisfaction of the common people of Bengal. Both prisoners were enlarged, which would scarcely have happened if they had been considered as any longer dangerous. It is at least probable that both left Calcutta poorer men than they entered it. The sensitive Shitab Roy returned to Patna, where he died shortly after, it was said of a broken heart. Mohammed, being made of sterner stuff, lived on to be again and again involved in political intrigues and troubles. There is the evidence of his own letters to prove that Hastings considered that an unjust or too severe a measure had been dealt out to Shitab Roy: on his visiting Patna some time after that naib's death, he gave his son Roy-Royan a secondary but profitable post in the treasury of Bahar, declaring that he did so "from an entire conviction of the merits and faithful services, and in consideration of the late sufferings, of his deceased father."†

* "Men are not hanged who have got a million of money in their pockets."—*Letter to Josias Dupré.*

† In addition to the charges already mentioned, Mohammed Reza Khan was accused of a treacherous correspondence with the Mogul and the Mahrattas. "But," says Hastings, with curious *sang froid*, "*this last is a new and accidental charge.*"

* Hastings says, in one of his letters, that there were two hundred witnesses to swear *for* Mohammed Reza Khan, and two hundred to swear against him!

† Letters, Minutes, &c., as given by Scott,

The governor may have felt additional remorse or tenderness from the circumstance of his having taken the arrest of Shitab Roy upon himself. With Mohammed Reza Khan he had no alternative save the desperate one we have mentioned:—the select committee commanded the seizure of that chief, and the turning the infernal malice and ingenuity of Nuncomar against him; but in their memorable letter they had not mentioned the name or said one word in allusion to Shitab Roy—they had only approved and applauded Hastings's doings in this respect months after, when they received his own report of what he had done. There can be no mistake or possibility of doubt as to these facts. In a letter to the secret committee, Hastings said that he had judged it *advisable, and consistent with the tenor* of their commands, to have Shitab Roy arrested and brought down to Calcutta. In a private letter to his close friend Josias Dupré, he says, after mentioning the orders he had received to arrest Mohammed Reza Khan, and to accuse him of frauds, embezzlements, &c. —"Rajah Shitab Roy, the dewan of Patna, being nearly in the same predicament with respect to the suspicion of embezzling the revenue, it was judged necessary to extend the same orders to him." Nothing, however, could be more complete than the sanction afterwards given to the proceeding by the secret committee. "The extirpation of Mohammed Reza Khan's influence," said they in a letter to their governor, "was absolutely necessary, and the apprehending of Shitab Roy equally so, as the latter had been too long connected with Mohammed Reza Khan to be independent of him; but if that had not been the case, it would have been absurd to continue a naib-dewan in the province of Bahar after abolishing that office in Bengal. . . . . The company's affairs must be put in the hands of persons who may be rendered responsible in England for their conduct in India." In other places the secret committee and the directors in general declared that nothing could have been more prompt, energetic, wise, and altogether admirable, than the self-inspired conduct of Hastings in this particular.

Clive, in his treaty with the Emperor Shah Alum, had guaranteed to that poor and forlorn potentate the quiet possession of Corah, Allahabad, and the Douab, and the annual tribute or stipend from the company of twenty-six lacs of rupees—about 260,000*l.* sterling. In the profundity of their own debts and embarrassments the court of directors and the court of proprietors at home, and the impoverished people of Bengal abroad, had long grudged this money. It appears that the lacs were at no time very punctually paid, and that for considerably more than two years' payment had been withheld altogether. Hastings had good reasons to plead for stopping the stipend, though it unfortunately happened that the cases were not specified or provided for in Clive's treaty, or, as it is usually called, the Treaty of Allahabad. In spite of the disapprobation of the government of Calcutta, Shah Alum had thrown himself into the arms of the Mahrattas, and, quitting his territories of Allahabad and Corah, the only possessions he had, and which he owed entirely to the English, he, in the beginning of the year 1771, took the field with a mixed but numerous army. It is said that he was secretly encouraged by Sujah Dowla, vizier and nabob of Oude, who wished to be free of his presence, in order to recover possession of Corah and Allahabad, which had formerly belonged to Oude, and which he calculated might be restored to his dominion with permission of the English, and upon a pecuniary bargain with them. By the end of the year 1771, the Mahratta chiefs carried the poor Mogul in triumph into Delhi; but, though in the palace of Aurungzebe, Shah Alum found that he was a mere state prisoner, compelled to do whatever the turbulent chiefs required of him. He was soon hurried into the field by these Mahrattas, who were eager for the plun-

Hist. Bengal; Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.; and Gleig, Life of Hastings.

In a private letter to Mr. Sykes, written while the trial was in progress, Hastings says, "We have entered on the inquiry of Rajah Shitab Roy, who will escape with credit. Indeed, I scarce know why he was called to an account." This is the more startling as it was Hastings himself who had called the poor Hindu to account, and who had arrested or trepanned him.

der, if not for the permanent possession, of Rohilcund, a country which was equally coveted by the Nabob of Oude, who had for some time kept his eye upon it, in the hope of obtaining it by the assistance of English troops, or English-trained sepoys. The Rohillas, however, found themselves obliged to apply for the insidious aid of this vizier-nabob, and they obtained his promise not only to assist them himself, but also to procure for them the more potent co-operation of the company. At the same time he intimated to Sir Robert Barker, the general commanding the company's forces, and to the governor and council at Calcutta, that to allow any stipend or tribute to the Mogul would be only sending money to the rapacious and turbulent Mahrattas, who were deadly enemies to him, the close ally of the English, and who were, or soon would be, the most powerful enemies of the company itself. But long before this intimation, and apparently before Shah Alum marched away from Allahabad with the Mahrattas, the payment of the tribute had been suspended, upon the cogent pleas that the trade and revenue of the English provinces suffered a visible decay by this annual diminution of their specie; that the company were compelled to borrow money for their own uses at high interest; and, finally, that, the provinces of Bengal and Bahar having lost nearly *one-half* of their inhabitants by the famine of 1769-70, and the survivors in many parts being unable to pay their rents and taxes to the company through the absence of purchasers and the want of money in the country, they could no longer possibly bear the annual drainage of the twenty-six lacs, which never returned into the English provinces either by way of trade or otherwise.* But, if this had been held sufficient cause to suspend the Mogul's allowance, his departure with the Mahrattas was considered as a throwing up, on his part, of all right or claim to English money and English protection, and the strong arguments of the Nabob of Oude had no doubt presented themselves to the mind of Hastings before he received that nabob's letters and messages.

At this critical juncture, and while the ministry and parliament at home were calling in question the territorial rights of the company, and making it doubtful, at least for a time, whether the crown, or nation, would not take those rights to itself, and reduce the company to its original condition of a mere trading body, a dissatisfied English officer, who had a turn for bold projects and political intrigues, conceived a plan that evidently brought a cold perspiration upon Hastings and the council. This officer was John Morrison, who had held the rank of captain in the king's service, and of major in the company's service, but who had resigned the latter commission in 1770, and then repaired to Allahabad to try his fortune with Shah Alum, from whom he at once obtained the rank of general. When the Mogul began to complain of the non-payment of the lacs, Morrison made him understand the real nature and character of the company, which few natives, whether princes or peasants, could ever comprehend; and he persuaded him that if he, John Morrison, were only appointed ambassador and plenipotentiary from the Great Mogul to his Britannic Majesty George III., he would obtain for Shah Alum, not only the tribute of twenty-six lacs and more, but many other advantages—and all these not from a corporation of traders and traffickers, but from a crowned head. Shah Alum gave him the diplomatic rank he required, and Morrison came down the Ganges to the Dutch settlement of Chinchura on the Hooghly, with his credentials, and the Mogul's proposals neatly written in Persian. The chief of the proposals was simply this:—The Great Mogul Shah Alum, as undoubted lord and sovereign of Hindustan, &c., and as having full right so to do, would transfer to his Britannic majesty Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with all that the company possessed in those parts, and which was all forfeited by them, upon condition that his Britannic majesty would pay the pecuniary homage of thirty-two lacs, and aid the Great Mogul with troops and arms.

On arriving at Chinchura, John Mor-

* Letter from Hastings to Sir George Colebrooke, in Gleig's Memoirs of Warren Hastings.

rison wrote a letter to Hastings, formally notifying his high appointment, asking whether he would receive him in his public capacity, and demanding a passage to England in one of the company's ships. Hastings—who saw through a hundred eyes and heard through a hundred ears, for the company had its agents or spies everywhere—knew the contents of Morrison's papers, and the full extent of his audacious plan, which was regarded as nothing less than treason against the company. Apparently in no very courteous terms, and with the advice of the select committee, he wrote in reply, that he would neither receive him in his public capacity of the Mogul's ambassador, nor allow him a passage in any ship belonging to the company, or to the port of Calcutta. This letter was addressed to Major John Morrison, and was returned unopened, as the diplomatic soldier would not waive his claim to the title of ambassador. The next step of Hastings was to prevent Morrison's embarking for England under any other flag. "At any other period," said he, in detailing these transactions to a director and friend, "such a project, and the authors of it, would have been treated with contempt; *but I confess I see so near a similitude between the offers of the king (Shah Alum), and the claims of the ministers of our own court on the government of Fort St. George, that I could not but be alarmed for the consequences with which they might be attended, and I judged it of the most essential importance to prevent Major Morrison, if possible, from arriving in England before the court of directors could be furnished with full intelligence of his errand, and take the necessary measures for obviating its effect.*" * In another letter, written to the same important correspondent in England, he said—"What I have written to you upon the subject of Major Morrison will appear trifling, *if* his project should not meet with a favourable reception from the ministry. It appears to me a direct violation of the laws, but he is said to have a warm patron in Lord North, and the grant of the dewannee of Bengal to the crown may be deemed a valid plea for dispossessing the present proprietors of it." Having ascertained that the dangerous major had engaged a passage in a Danish ship, he applied to M. Bie, a gentleman of the superior council of Tranquebar, a Danish settlement in the southern Carnatic, deputed to regulate the affairs of the Danes in Bengal, and through his means he obtained a positive order that Morrison should not be admitted into any Danish ship.* Hastings knew quite enough of law to be aware that some of these proceedings were not quite legal; but he took the responsibility upon himself, thinking it better to incur personal blame and the chances of heavy damages than to allow Morrison to get to England before the court of directors could be put on their guard. It appears, that except the Dane there was no other foreign ship that could sail for Europe that season. This one embargo on the major was therefore enough—Hastings's private letters and public dispatches would be in Leadenhall-street before the Mogul ambassador could by any apparent possibility sail from India. "I do not consider it necessary," wrote he, with a moderation which cost him nothing, "to take any further steps in this business; what I have done is sufficient for the purpose which I intended. I neither wish to keep Major Morrison in India, nor indeed is it possible. . . . . As I know not what construction may be put on this detention of Major Morrison, in England, *I have taken no notice of it on our proceedings, choosing rather to hazard the consequences of it than, by making it an act of our government, involve the company in trouble by my indiscretion.*"† The major's adventure ended in smoke.

* Letter to Sir George Colebrooke, as given by Mr. Gleig, Memoirs of Warren Hastings.

* Letter to Sir George Colebrooke, as given by Mr. Gleig, Memoirs of Warren Hastings. Hastings adds that he had promised the Danish agent to represent to the court of directors at London this instance of the ready attention shown by the Danish gentlemen in India to the interests of the English company. But the Danes were in no condition to refuse compliance with the will of the determined English governor, who could easily have done them many ill offices, and who knew that in their weakness and isolation they could only exist or prosecute their trade through English sufferance. † Id.

It was perfectly clear that twenty-six lacs of rupees per annum was too great a price to pay for the merely ceremonial investiture of the company in the dewannee of Bengal, over which neither the reigning Mogul nor his predecessor had ever had the least control; and the state of mutual obligations between Shah Alum and the English appears to be not unfairly described by Hastings, who taxes the Mogul with the basest treachery and ingratitude, and says—"Of all the powers of Hindustan the English alone had really acknowledged his authority; they invested him with the royalty he now possesses; they conquered for him and gave him a territory; they paid him an annual tribute, the only pledge of fealty which he has ever received."* The territory here spoken of was Allahabad and Corah; and shortly after detaining Major Morrison Hastings learned that the helpless Mogul had ceded both Corah and Allahabad to the Mahrattas, who were declaring their intention of taking immediate possession. This was considered as equivalent to a complete discharge from all the obligation's of Clive's treaty. Moreover the Nabob of Oude, as the faithful ally of the English, claimed their assistance in preventing the Mahrattas from obtaining a settlement in provinces that lay in the heart of his own country, and that would bring them close upon the frontiers of the company's territories. The English at once threw a garrison into Allahabad, where the Mogul's deputy or governor received them with a welcome, declaring that his master was no longer a free agent but a prisoner to the Mahratta chiefs, who were in the habit of subjecting him even to the degradation of blows and other personal chastisement when he hesitated to sign such grants, firmans, or decrees as they required. Hastings, who was most anxious for the preservation of peace, as the only possible means of restoring the prosperity and trade of Bengal, would gladly have stopped here, and for some time he was deaf to the prayers and representations of Sujah Dowla, who continued to believe, or rather to wish the English to believe, that the Mahrattas, after subduing the *Rohillas*, would overrun the whole of Oude, and then, descending the Ganges, spread havoc over Bahar and Bengal.

As a little episode, however, Hastings sent a detachment, under Captain Jones, to drive the Bootans, a resolute and daring people, out of Cooch-Bahar, and to annex that healthy and fertile province to the company's dominions. At the same time the attention of the governor was called to the inroads and devastations of the Senassie fakeers, an assemblage of men who united the several characters of saints, living martyrs, jugglers, robbers, and cut-throats, which, according to Indian notions and superstitions, were not irreconcilable. Tribes and hordes of the same species had long been in the habit of wandering throughout India, almost naked, pretending to live by alms, but stealing, plundering, murdering, and committing every act of obscenity and violence. A host of this kind, headed by an old woman who pretended to the gift of enchantment, had defeated an army of Aurungzebe, and caused that emperor, when at the height of his power, to tremble on his throne at Delhi. They were not the least of the many scourges and curses to which the country was periodically liable under the weak and divided empire and imbecile government of the native princes. The present swarm fell upon Bengal, rapidly and silently, like a flight of locusts. They rushed in search of their prey in bodies each two or three thousand strong, and wherever they penetrated they burned and destroyed the villages, and committed every abomination. Five battalions of sepoys were sent in pursuit of them, but they moved at a speed that defied the pursuit of any regular infantry; and Hastings, to save the company money, had discharged the greater part of the native cavalry—the only cavalry, except a troop or two, the English had in that part of India. When it was reported and believed that the marauders had crossed the Bramapootra River they turned aside and re-appeared unexpectedly in different parts of the interior. "In spite of the strictest orders issued," wrote Hastings, "and the severest

* Letter to Sir George Colebrooke, as given by Mr. Gleig, Memoirs of Warren Hastings.

penalties threatened to the inhabitants, in case they fail in giving intelligence of the approach of the Senassies, they are so infatuated by superstition as to be backward in giving the information, so that the banditti are sometimes advanced into the very heart of our provinces before we know anything of their motions; as if they dropped from heaven to punish the inhabitants for their folly."* One of these parties fell in with a small detachment of newly-raised sepoys, defeated them, and killed Captain Edwards as he was attempting to rally them. Elated by this success the fakeers extended their ravages. Another British officer, with an entire battalion of sepoys, was vigilant in their pursuit wherever he could hear of them; but to no purpose,—they were always gone before he could reach the place to which he was directed. Hastings hurried on another detachment to assist in the pursuit, and ordered another to follow the track which the fakeers usually took on their return. Yet, after every possible exertion by all these corps, no great execution could be done upon the marauders, who, crossing rivers and mountains, got back to the wild country that lies between India, Tibet, and China. Their visit and their various depredations proved a serious blow to the revenues of the company, as well from real as from pretended losses.

Soon after the departure of the fakeers, Hastings set out on a visit to Oude, for various circumstances had induced him to change or modify his pacific policy, and to give a more ready ear to the prayers, plans, and suggestions of the ambitious nabob of that country, who now earnestly solicited a personal conference at Benares, in order to arrange new bargains and treaties with the English.† The Mahrattas too were really making war upon the Rohillas, the allies of Oude, and a considerable part of the English army, under Sir Robert Barker, had marched into Rohilcund, where they found the Mahrattas more inclined to a retreat than to fight, and the Rohillas more disposed to regard the English or the troops of the Nabob of Onde as enemies than as friends. And, in fact, the sovereign of Oude had conceived, and had some time before this communicated to the English governor at Calcutta, his plan of conquering the Rohilla country and annexing it to his dominions; and the correspondence upon this subject, more than anything else, had introduced the proposal of an interview. Hastings left Calcutta on the 24th of June, and arrived at Benares on the 19th of August, 1773. He found the vizier-nabob waiting his arrival, and eager for business. The affairs and interests to be arranged were numerous and mighty; and though no time was lost in idleness and ceremonies, the negotiations occupied three whole weeks.* These considerations, final resolutions, and agreements were these:—

I. The Rohilla chiefs, when attacked by the Mahrattas, made an offer of forty lacs of rupees to the vizier for his assistance, and the vizier had promised to give half of this money to the company for the services of the English troops and sepoys. The troops of Oude had been of little service, but the troops of the company had cleared the country of the Mahrattas; and yet the Rohilla chiefs, though bound by a solemn treaty with the vizier-nabob, refused to pay the forty lacs of rupees or any part of them. The Rohillas had always been turbulent and dangerous neighbours to Oude, and must keep the nabob poor and in constant need of

* Another letter to Sir George Colebrooke, dated March, 1773.

† Hastings states the following as some of the motives for this journey into Oude: "Hitherto he (the vizier-nabob) has been entirely managed by our military, who have contrived to keep him so weak that his alliance is of no manner of use to us, but obliges us in every alarm to send our army to prevent his being overpowered by his enemies, which has been usually done at the company's expense, little being required for reimbursement, and that little paid after long delays. I wish to establish a new and more rational alliance between him and the company, and more creditable to both, and to establish his dependence on the government, instead of the military influence which has hitherto ruled him."—*Letter to Josias Dupre, dated 9th March*, 1773.

It appears that Sir Robert Barker, the general and the head of this military influence, had drawn pretty largely from the Nabob of Oude's treasury, though the company had been getting little or nothing from it.

* Various Letters of Warren Hastings.—Scott, Hist. of Bengal.

English assistance, unless those powerful allies, by one great effort, for which he was willing to pay a liberal price—and he knew how much the company wanted money—should conquer that Afghan race, who were themselves but conquerors of a recent date, without any right but that of the sword, and without any consideration or mercy for the original and peaceful occupants of the soil, who were still tenfold more numerous than themselves. So far from being the industrious peaceful people that English parliamentary orators chose to fancy them, these Rohillas were about the most predatory, turbulent, and sanguinary of the Afghan tribes, who were all, and who all continue to this day to be, lawless and ferocious, and at the same time far braver and more formidable in war than any of the inhabitants of Lower India. Hastings ingeniously compared Rohilcund to Scotland before the union with England; but the Scots were one race thinly scattered over a poor country which had no other inhabitants, while the Rohillas were scattered over a rich country peopled by a different race, who regarded them as intruders and harsh task-masters, and heartily wished for their expulsion. In other respects the comparison was sufficiently correct for the occasion. "The Rohilla country," says Hastings, "is bounded on the west by the Ganges, and on the north and east by the mountains of Tartary. It is to the province of Oude, in respect both to its geographical and political relation, exactly what Scotland was to England before the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It lies open on the south where it touches Oude. The reduction of this territory would complete the defensive line of the vizier's dominions, and of course leave us less to defend, as he subsists on our strength entirely. It would add much to his income, *in which we should have our share.*" * Upon all these, and other considerations, Hastings consented to employ an army against the Rohillas, and to unite the country to Oude, the vizier-nabob engaging to pay the entire expenses of the army, according to a liberal scale fixed by the English themselves, and to pour into the empty treasury at Calcutta forty lacs of rupees. It is quite evident that this last consideration was the weightiest of all, and that Hastings would not have embarked in the Rohilla war but for the lacs and the necessities and urgent demands of the court of directors. In his dispatches to the India House, as well as in his private letters, he spoke of this journey to Benares as a financial and money-making expedition—only not wholly so.

II. The ruler of Oude was as anxious to recover possession of Corah and Allahabad, and the Doaub which stood within his frontier, as he was to annex Rohilcund. Only a few years before he had treacherously murdered a near relative in order to get the two fair provinces. It was impossible to allow the fulfilment of the grant extorted from the Mogul or the settlement of the Mahrattas in Corah and Allahabad; and it was held to be equally impossible for the Mogul to maintain himself in them, even if he could escape from the Mahratta thraldom and be pardoned and reinstated by the company whom he had so grievously offended. No regard was paid to the glaring fact that the Nabob of Oude would scarcely be more able to defend the two provinces than was the Mogul, without the aid of the company. But the nabob had money, the Mogul had none; and for fifty lacs of rupees—twenty paid down on the spot, and thirty to be paid in two years—Hastings sold Corah and Allahabad to Sujah Dowla.* According to his own accounts, which on several points are rather ambiguous or confused, Hastings wrote to Shah Alum in pressing terms to send to Benares a person in his confidence to treat on the subject of these provinces and about other affairs in which he might be concerned, he (Hastings) wishing for his concurrence in whatever plan might

* Letter to Mr. Sulivan.

* "Knowing," says Hastings, "that to give up these lands to him (the Mogul) would in reality be to give them up to the Mahrattas, our enemies, and to expose the dominions of the vizier our ally to almost certain ruin, I resolved to assert the right of the company to the possession of them, and to convert them to such uses as their value and *the necessities of the company required.*"—*Letter to Sir George Colebrooke.*

be adopted for the disposal of the provinces. "He appointed," says Hastings, "a man of distinction to appear at the meeting, but afterwards recalled him and referred me to Sujah Dowla as his vizier, and to his naib Moneer-u-Dowla, who had had the government of those districts, to whom the only orders which he gave were to demand the arrears of the tribute due from Bengal, the punctual payment of it in future, and the restitution of Corah and Allahabad."* This asking of money from the company was like testing the patience of the devil with holy water; the arrears alone must by this time have amounted to seventy-eight lacs of rupees, or more!—and, to use his own words, the public treasury at Calcutta, when Hastings left it, "had scarce a rupee in it, and was loaded with a debt of a crore and a half of rupees."† Even the smooth and placid Hastings took fire. "As," said he, "I saw no use in excuses and evasions which all the world can see through, I replied to a peremptory demand of the Mogul, for the tribute of Bengal, by a peremptory declaration that not a rupee should pass through our provinces, till they had recovered from the distresses to which the lavish payments made to him had principally contributed.‡ The board have supported this declaration by a resolution to pay him no more till they shall receive the company's orders for it." §

III. As the unauthorised residence even of British subjects was frequently embarrassing or provocative of suspicion to the government of Calcutta—and perhaps the more so since John Morrison's adventure—it was agreed that no Europeans whatsoever should be permitted to reside in any of the territories of the Nabob of Oude, without the knowledge and consent of the company.

IV. Cheyte Sing, the young Rajah of Benares, and son and successor of Bulwant Sing, was included in some of the arrangements between the company and the Nabob of Oude; for Benares, the holy city, and the dependent district were geographically included in the province of Allahabad, and Sujah Dowla had long aimed at the destruction of the young rajah, whom the English by previous engagements were bound to support. Hastings insisted that all the rights of his father Bulwant Sing should be confirmed to Cheyte Sing, "*to continue unchanged to his posterity for ever*," and that he should be confirmed in the zemindaries of Ghazipoor, &c., about which there had been some disputes. A plan of equal duties was also settled with the young rajah, who agreed to exempt from duties broadcloth, copper, and lead. Sujah Dowla, as a matter of course, was diplomatically bound to respect his young and weak neighbour, Cheyte Sing.

All these and some other collateral matters were settled when the Nabob of Oude was seized with a money panic, and, fearing that he had engaged beyond his ability, he desired to decline for the present the conquest of Rohilcund, for which he was to pay the forty lacs of rupees and all the expenses of the company's troops. To this postponement Hastings readily agreed.* He clearly foresaw that the Rohilcund enterprise would be open to severe animadversion, and that people in England would not comprehend the real condition of the Rohillas, who, in sober truth, were little better than a great association of brigands and freebooters, who might be compared to the moss-troopers of

* Letter to Sir George Colebrooke.

† Id. A crore is a hundred lacs of rupees, or, estimating the rupee at two shillings, a million of pounds sterling.

‡ Here the governor and president chose to overlook the horrible famine and depopulation, the wasting incursions of the fakeers and other marauders, the enormous drains made upon the specie of Bengal for the wars in the Carnatic and other purposes. He, however, reiterates this argument, and seems to have considered that men ought to believe that the poverty of Bengal had been almost wholly occasioned by paying for two or three years the annual tribute or stipend of twenty-six lacs.—See *Letter to Sir George Colebrooke.*

§ Letter to Sulivan.

* It appears from his own letters that, while the immediate conquest of Rohilcund remained part of the bargain, Hastings had agreed to take forty-five lacs for Corah and Allahabad, and that he raised this price on the nabob's asking for a delay to the Rohilla expedition. "As," says he, "the nabob would have *less to pay and less to lay out*, the acknowledgment for Corah, &c., *was increased to fifty lacs.*"—*Id.* The times of payment were also brought closer.

our borders in the sixteenth century. "I was glad," said he, "a few days after he had finished his arrangements, to be freed from the Rohilla expedition, because I was doubtful of the judgment which would have been passed upon it at home, where I see too much stress laid upon general maxims, and too little attention given to the circumstances which require an exception to be made from them. . . . On the other hand, however, the absence of the Mahrattas and the weak state of the Rohillas promised an easy conquest of them; *and I own that, such was my idea of the company's distress at home, added to my knowledge of their wants abroad, that I should have been glad of any occasion to employ their forces, which would save so much of their pay and expenses.*"* But in consenting to put off the grand expedition he obliged the nabob to agree that, whenever or for whatsoever occasion he might require the assistance of the company's troops, he would pay for it at the rate of 210,000 rupees a-month per brigade, which was the rate fixed at the commencement of the conference, when Sujah Dowla was contemplating immediate operations against the Rohillas. This Hastings considered as a *grand coup de finance*, for hitherto the nabob had been constantly calling English troops to his assistance without paying anything to the company. The agreement respecting the Rohillas was kept out of the treaty, which was finally adjusted and signed on the 7th of September, 1773. It has been said that Hastings withheld from the court of directors intelligence of the project, which after all was only suspended; but this can scarcely have been the case, and we have his letters to two of the principal directors —Sulivan and Colebrooke—minutely detailing what passed on the subject. It is, indeed, from these very letters to directors that the foregoing details are taken.

When the meeting at Benares broke up, Sujah Dowla proceeded to reduce some forts and districts in his neighbourhood that were still held by the Mahrattas, and Hastings returned to Calcutta rejoicing in the money he had made and in the money he had saved. In the article of saving alone—without counting the pay in prospective for the troops—the suspension of the Mogul's tribute, being added to the reduction of the young Nabob of Bengal's stipend and the stoppage of Mohammed Reza Khan's and Shitab Roy's allowances, amounted to fifty-seven lacs per annum.* Speaking of the suppresssion of the tribute or stipend to Shah Alum, he says—"I am not apt to attribute a large share of merit to my own actions, but I own that *this* is one of the few to which I can with confidence affix my own approbation." With respect to his other proceedings at Benares he says —"If the court of directors shall think it proper to disclaim what I have done, they must also point out the means of undoing it. They must cancel the treaty (which God forbid!); they must repay what they shall have received from the vizier, and relinquish their claim to the rest; they must discharge the arrears of the tribute and punctually pay the future yearly demands of twenty-six lacs to the king. But from what fund these great things are to be done I am sure they will be unable to direct."†

Hastings now applied himself to the internal administration of Bengal—to the establishment of something like an efficient police, to the posting detachments so as to prevent the incursions of the fakeers and other marauders, to the formation of local courts in the districts, to the regulation of taxes and of the collection of the revenue—a tremendous task!—to the protection of native trade and industry; to the removing absurd regulations and impolitic taxes, duties, and fees upon native marriages;‡ to the

* Letter to Sulivan.

* Letter to Sykes.

† Letter to Sir George Colebrooke. At this time the constant and pressing advice of the company to their servant Hastings is, "Get money, get money, at all events get money;" and they scarcely can be said to add the parenthetical part of the old adage—"*honestly if you can.*"

‡ In allusion to this and some other reforms he says—"Of my foreign policy I have no cause to be ashamed; but that on which I chiefly congratulate myself is the abrogation of laws and usages oppressive to the people, and of one most destructive to population, which, though requiring little more than the stroke of a pen to remove it, I particularly mention, because, though

suppression of peculation and rapacity in the company's servants up the country or in remote districts; and to other cares and occupations almost innumerable. Some of the means adopted may not have been of the purest or highest kind, several may not be reconcilable either with our modern notions of political economy or of morals and of justice, some may have been *pro tempore* expedients; but the present end attained was most indisputably a great benefit and a wonderful improvement on the immediately preceding state of things. Even those who were no encomiasts of Warren Hastings, confessed that since his return to Calcutta as governor of Bengal (in 1771), the whole country had assumed or was rapidly assuming a different aspect. The fearful gaps made in the population by famine and disease began to be filled up by the removal of the impolitic checks upon marriage, by the improved condition and more abundant food of the natives, and by the frequent immigrations of quiet laborious people from other parts of India, who sought and found that protection and encouragement under the government of Hastings, which they could find scarcely anywhere else in a country kept almost in a constant state of anarchy and misery by revolutions, petty feuds, and the ravages of flying Mahratta hordes, or of hordes of a still more destructive and murderous description—Afghans, Jaats, Decoits, Thugs, Beels, and others of that long array of monstrosity which gives to the authentic story of Hindustan the appearance of fable or of a horrid dream. With rajahs and nabobs, with khans and other grandees, the case may have been somewhat different; but the native merchant, manufacturer, weaver, tiller of the soil, artisan, all that we call people, throughout the wide extent of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, were brought to consider Hastings as a benefactor, and to revere his name.

It was probably to this period he alluded when he said in private conversation many years after, when nearly all England was accusing him of monstrous cruelty and oppression—"I could have gone from Calcutta to Moorshedabad, and from Moorshedabad to Patna and Benares, without a guard, without a sepoy, without any protection but what was to be found in the good-will and affection of the natives." In the multiplicity of his employments he found time to devote to sundry speculations and inquiries, and to an expansive scheme for enlarging our geographical knowledge of Asia, and extending our commercial intercourse to regions which had scarcely been traversed by any European since the days of Marco Polo. The detachment which he had sent into Cooch Bahar had cleared that country of the Bootans, though not without some hard fighting, for that singular race of men were robust and bold, and resolute in keeping what they had once got. But, being reinforced, Captain Jones followed the Bootans into their own country and took their strong fortress of Dellamcotta by storm. The Daeb Rajah, or secular governor of Bootan, then implored for peace, and sent an ambassador with presents to Calcutta. Hastings acceded to conditions, treated the ambassador, apparently a bonze or priest of the Bogdo-Lama, with great kindness, and eagerly grasped at what he considered a favourable opportunity for exploring the countries of Bootan, Tibet, and Cashmere, and for making inquiries respecting a direct land communication with China. He selected Mr. Bogle for this mission, and he carefully prepared for him a paper of instructions, showing the objects to which he ought more particularly to direct his attention and inquiries. Well furnished with presents and samples of English goods and manufactures, and instructed by Hastings not to be sparing of his money where money could do good, or procure curious and interesting specimens of the natural history and industry of the *terra incognita* he was about to visit, Mr. Bogle started on his adventurous journey in May, 1774. He penetrated as far as Tassisudon, the capital of Bootan Proper, but there he was stopped by the jealousies of the Dharma Rajah, or Bogdo-Lama, the spi-

"One known, and perhaps forgotten, it is one to which my mind ever recurs with self-satisfaction—the abolition of the duties and fees on pilgrims."

Mahrattas.

ritual and supreme ruler of Bootan, and a supposed incarnation of the deity; and by the old and revered customs of the people, who are as exclusive and as averse to the visits of strangers as are the Chinese themselves, whom they nearly resemble in features and other particulars. Thus the Himalaya was not passed, no intercourse was established even with the interior of Bootan, and no great addition was made to our knowledge; but the attempt was highly honourable to Hastings, and the care he devoted to the subject extraordinary in one so harassed and oppressed by business of all kinds.*

* Notes of Hastings, as quoted in Gleig's Memoirs.—Another little circumstance, but proper to assist in our estimate of this versatile, indefatigable, and remarkable man, is this At his busiest time, just after his taking upon himself the government at Calcutta, he paid the greatest attention to the machinery, operations, and projects of a Mr. Wits, who, apparently, had been sent out by the company to establish silk-works in Bengal, and to improve the tedious processes of the natives in the preparation of silk-thread. His biographer gives one long letter on this subject, and no doubt others exist.

## CHAPTER XV.

HASTINGS was not deceived in his anticipation that the Nabob of Oude would soon want his assistance. At the end of the year 1773 that prince was so terrified at rumours of invasion by the Abdallies, another numerous and warlike Afghan tribe, that he applied to Hastings for some place of shelter within the limits of the British dominions wherein his own women and children, and those belonging to the principal families of Oude, might have a secure asylum. The governor promptly granted this request, considering it as honourable to the English, and as tending to increase the population of the company's provinces as well indirectly as directly; for—so Hastings calculated—the women and children of these great men would be sure to be accompanied by multitudes of retainers and attendants, male and female, and these would be sure to draw in their train another multitude of artisans, who might settle and remain within the English limits, and attract other immigrants by their example. As the Abdallies did not come this time, the nabob and his chiefs kept their wives and children at home at Lucknow and Fyzabad, and the whole scheme evaporated, to the no small disappointment of Hastings. But very shortly after this strange application, the sovereign of Oude made another of a very different kind. Encouraged by some successes he had obtained over the Mahrattas, and by a new league he had struck up with Shah Alum, who had escaped from his Mahratta bondage, and had actually engaged to assist the nabob with his small army in the reduction of Rohilcund, Sujah Dowla applied eagerly for the instant marching of the English brigade which was quartered at Allahabad. Though the 210,000 rupees per month were acceptable, the suddenness of this application rather disconcerted Hastings. No time, however, was lost, and the brigade, under the command of Colonel Champion, received orders to march into the province of Oude with the declared purpose of invading the Rohilla country. Hastings did not think that the vizier-nabob, who was with the Mogul in the neighbourhood of Delhi, could possibly be ready to take the field so soon; "but," said he, "the brigade will gain in its discipline by being on actual service, and *its expense will be saved.*" From the middle of February to the middle of April the brigade remained in Oude doing nothing; but then the vizier-nabob with his forces joined Colonel Champion, and the open southern frontier of Rohilcund was immediately crossed. The Rohilla chiefs, who would long have defied the nabob and his host, were appalled at the approach of the company's brigade, and they expressed an earnest inclination to come to an amicable accommodation. Sujah Dowla demanded, as the price of peace, two crore of rupees, which was, probably, more than the whole country contained in specie. The Rohillas then took up a good position on the side of Babul Nulla: nearly their entire force, which probably amounted to about 25,000 fighting men, was collected on that spot; and they had cavalry, artillery, and rockets. But when they were attacked by the British brigade, on the morning of the 23rd of April, superior discipline and tactics, and better arms, led to the usual result. They were thoroughly defeated and routed; but their valour and stamina were proved by their fighting at unusually close quarters for two hours and twenty minutes, and leaving 2000 of their number on the field before they broke and fled. Several of their sirdars, or

chiefs, were slain, and among them Hafez Ramet, the head of the confederacy, who was killed while bravely rallying his people. One of his sons was also killed, and two were taken prisoners and consigned to the tender mercies of Sujah Dowla. That nabob behaved as nabobs always did in battle: he kept at a great distance behind a river, surrounded by his cavalry and a great train of artillery; he refused Champion the use of some of his guns and some of his cavalry, nor would he move from his safe abiding-place till the news of the enemy's defeat reached him.* Then he and his unwarlike rabble moved forward with alacrity, but it was only to plunder the Rohilla camp, which Champion considered as the fair booty of his brigade. "We had the honour of the day," said he, "and these banditti the profit."† Hence there arose a soreness and bitterness between the nabob and the English commander, who certainly betrayed an over-anxiety for booty and prize-money, and that too in cases where his right, or that of his brigade, was more questionable than on the present occasion. Both nabob and colonel complained of one another to Hastings, and in their rancorous feelings each exaggerated the faults of the other. One consequence of this was, that the reports of the horrors of the war which reached Europe through English channels, through Champion and the officers serving with him, and all, like himself, incensed against the nabob for his appropriating all the plunder, were considerably over-coloured. Hastings felt, to his cost, the consequences of this over-colouring, when the case came to be taken up by the ardent imagination of Burke. Still, however unduly excited, Champion and his officers had too much English honour and veracity wholly to invent facts, circumstances, and details; and it must remain upon record, as an unquestionable truth, that many horrors and cruelties were committed in this Rohilla war—not by the English and their sepoys, who had all the fighting, but by the nabob's rabble, who never fought at all—not with the connivance of Hastings, [illegible] his loud and repeated remonstrance. The natural disposition, the habits, the policy, the cool calculations for the interest of the company, and of the chances of profit and loss from the Rohilcund expedition, all joined in making the English governor averse to cruelty, bloodshed, and devastation. Upon being informed by Champion that the nabob's troops were plundering and burning the villages of the quiet Hindu inhabitants, who, so far from making common cause with the Rohillas, their oppressors, were ready to render all the services against them that their weakness and timidity allowed of, he wrote to the colonel to express his abhorrence of these proceedings, and to point out how impolitic they were, and how prejudicial to Sujah Dowla's own interest. "I cannot," said he, writing to Champion, "omit to take notice of the sensible and humane counsel which you gave to the vizier, on the orders issued by him for laying waste the Rohilla country, a measure which would have reflected equal dishonour on our arms, and reproach on his authority, had it been continued. You wisely judged that, to effect the conquest of the country, it was almost as necessary to conciliate the minds of the people as to defeat the actual rulers." Many days later he wrote again —"The picture you have given of the vizier's conduct is *shocking to humanity*; but surely your advice and strenuous remonstrance against acts of oppression and *wanton* cruelty ought to prove some restraint, and, if not, would be a justification of bolder conduct. You have afforded an instance at the commencement of the present operations, where the vizier put a stop to the ravages of the country at your intercession. I have addressed the vizier himself in the strongest terms on the subject of his general conduct." At the same time Hastings kept writing to Mr. Middleton, the confidential agent of his own appointing, and who was in Sujah Dowla's camp; and the chief purport of his letters to this functionary was to recommend and to insist upon mercy and moderation. In speaking of the captive family of Hafez Ramet, whose blood Burke accused him of selling

* Letter from Colonel Champion to Hastings.
† Id.

to Sujah Dowla for gold, he said, in a tone which would have done honour to the eloquence and humanity of Burke himself—"Tell the vizier that the English manners are abhorrent of every species of inhumanity and oppression, and enjoin the gentlest treatment of a vanquished enemy. Require and entreat his observance of this principle towards the family of Hafez. Tell him my instructions to you generally, but urgently enforce the same maxims; and that no part of his conduct will operate so powerfully in winning the affections of the English as instances of benevolence and feeling for others. If these arguments don't prevail, you may inform him directly that you have my orders to insist upon a proper treatment of the family of Hafez Ramet; since in our alliance with him our national character is involved in every act which subjects his own to reproach; that I shall publicly exculpate this government from the imputation of assenting to such a procedure, and shall reserve it as an objection to any future engagements with him when the present service shall have been accomplished."*

The necessity of clearing the whole region of the Rohilla chiefs and their bands, who neither tilled nor spun, who despised every occupation but that of war and plunder, was understood from the first; but, if the nabob devastated the country, and destroyed or scared away its old and peaceful inhabitants, whose industry paid the revenues, and if the English troops were to be allowed to appropriate the spoils of the vanquished Rohillas, how would the nabob be able to make his large payments to the company? Hastings reminded Colonel Champion of these difficulties, and strongly condemned him for attempting to search for treasures and booty in the captured town of Pelibeet. The Rohillas had exhausted all their strength or spirit in one well-contested battle; they never again made head in the interior of the country against the English, and the rest of the war consisted of skirmishes and pursuit. At Bissoulah, the principal city, in the very centre of Rohilcund, the English found the army of Shah Alum, which, according to the Mogul's agreement with the Nabob of Oude, had penetrated the country from the side of Delhi. This force had done nothing, and had now nothing to do, as the English had in reality finished the war; but, to the astonishment of Champion, Nujeef Khan, the commander of it, demanded a part of the plunder and a part of the conquered territory for his master, the emperor, in right of the treaty which he had concluded with Sujah Dowla. The nabob-vizier could not dispute the treaty, as Shah Alum sent the English commander a copy of it; but the Nabob of Oude pretended that the counterpart, which was in his own possession, stipulated that the emperor should take the field in person, and that, as he had not done so, but merely sent Nujeef Khan, the whole bargain was broken, and he had no right either to spoil or to territory. Champion obtained a sight of this curious counterpart, and ascertained, by means of the interpreter to his army, that there was no such variation in it; and Nujeef Khan and others affirmed that the emperor had never made such a stipulation even verbally. Champion would gladly have gratified the Mogul at the expense of the nabob, whom he so cordially hated; but Hastings and the council at Calcutta decided that the whole of the country should and must remain to Sujah Dowla, according to their own treaty with him, in which the emperor was certainly neither named nor thought of. Fyzoola Khan collected the greater part of the dispossessed, fugitive Rohillas, and took up a very strong post near the frontiers of the country, expecting to be joined by other tribes of the great Afghan family, to which he and his Rohillas belonged. It was apprehended by Sujah Dowla that the Mahrattas would come down also; and his fears induced him to open negotiations with Fyzoola Khan. This turn of affairs was promoted by the temper of the English troops, who, disgusted with their ally and all his concerns, dispirited by long marches, short commons, and the total absence of prize-money and of any chance of it, were not very anxious to attack a bold enemy in a formidable

* Letters to Middleton, as given in Gleig's Memoirs of Warren Hastings.

position among rocks and hills, and defended by trenches, stockades, and other works. A treaty was, therefore, hurried to a conclusion, Fyzoola Khan surrendering one-half of all his effects to the Nabob of Oude, and that nabob granting him a jaghire in Rohilcund. Some few chiefs remained on the frontiers with Fyzoola Khan; but the large majority, with their vassals or followers, went into other countries to seek new settlements with sword and spear. The Afghan race might almost be said to be rooted out of Rohilcund. Their entire number probably never exceeded 80,000, counting all classes, and men, women, and children. The Hindu population that remained under the rule of the Nabob of Oude was estimated at 2,000,000.

Just as the first Rohilla war came to this conclusion, the new constitution, as framed by parliament, commenced its operation. General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Philip Francis arrived at Calcutta (Mr. Barwell, the fourth member, had been in India long before) on the 19th of October, 1774. On the following day the existing government was dissolved by proclamation, and the new council, consisting of the four gentlemen named, and Hastings with the rank of Governor-general of Bengal, took possession of its powers. Of his four colleagues Mr. Barwell alone was acceptable to Hastings. Three seemed to have come with the predetermination of opposing him in all things, and one of the three—Francis—hated him from the beginning with an intensity of which few English natures are capable. But among the judges who had arrived with the members of this new council Sir Elijah Impey, the senior in rank, was an old and dear friend of the governor-general. They had been schoolfellows at Westminster. Hastings, delighted at his appointment, had written to Impey—"The news of your appointment to preside over the high court of justice affords me every cause of satisfaction without a circumstance of regret to allay it. In truth, my friend, nothing else could have reconciled me to that part of the act, which, if any latitude is left to you in its first establishment, may, and I am sure will, be made a source of the most valuable benefits to this country." The general letter of the court of directors, which was read at the first meeting of the new council, recommended above all things unanimity and concord among those to whom the powers of the government were delegated: it required them to do all in their power to preserve peace in India; it required them to meet in council twice every week at least; it committed to Hastings, as governor-general, the charge of carrying on all correspondence with the country powers; but at the same time it prescribed that he should dispatch no letters without the previous sanction of the council, and that all letters received by him from the country powers should be submitted to the council at their first meeting: it recommended a careful revision of all the Company's affairs, alliances, connexions, &c., formed or likely to be formed with the Indian states in the neighbourhood of the three presidencies; and, as by the act they alone had the power of peace or war in the country, it exhorted them to be careful and cautious in the extreme in committing themselves by any alliances, or compacts, with the native powers or with the Europeans settled in India.

As the company had fully approved of Hastings's system of letting the lands on farm, and of other parts of his fiscal regulations, the council were instructed to leave those things as they were; but the directors urged an inquiry into all past abuses and oppressions with the view of preventing the possibility of their recurrence. The letter finished, as it began with an exhortation to unanimity and concord. That unanimity was incompatible with a body so constituted, and with tempers, interests, and views so diametrically opposed. The temper of Francis alone was enough to introduce discord into a paradise—and Calcutta was far from being any such sojourn of beatified, peaceful spirits. Besides, he, and Clavering, and Monson, who had never been in India before, had come out to detect and reform abuses, which the long local knowledge of Hastings and Barwell viewed in a different light, or with a better acquaintance with the primary causes of them, and the difficulty of making any

sudden change. Correctors of abuses and reformers, particularly when deficient in information, find more abuses than really exist; and no class of men are more intolerant. Hastings, too, conscious of his own superior knowledge of Indian affairs and the Indian character, and accustomed for some time to an almost undivided authority, was not likely to descend very willingly from a whole to be only a fifth, or to entertain an implicit deference to the opinions of men who had passed their lives in such a different sphere. The natural love of power, and, perhaps, not less, the intimate and unselfish conviction that such a system was the only one that could work well with the native princes, who had no idea of a divided rule, had led him to act upon the recommendation of Clive, and, at least in his political negotiations, to assume a high and almost single authority. In conformity with this plan of action he had of his own accord appointed his friend Middleton to be resident and agent at the court of the Nabob of Oude, with instructions on all secret and important matters to correspond with himself alone, without communicating to the council at Calcutta, who did not invariably preserve the secrecy considered necessary to the success of his schemes and diplomacy.* And this was the first point to which Francis, Clavering, and Monson directed their attack. They demanded that the whole of Middleton's correspondence from his first appointment should be laid before them. Hastings refused to produce more than a part of it, saying that the other portions had reference to merely private matters or opinions; and hereupon they began to assert, by implication, that he had embarked in an unnecessary and unjustifiable war—the war with the Rohillas—for private and sordid motives; and that his whole connexion with Sujah Dowla had been a series of bad actions, fraud, and selfishness. As far as money was concerned, these aspersions were unjust to the utmost extent of injustice. Hastings was actually a poorer man now than when he quitted his inferior employment at Madras in 1771! He had made savings and gathered large contributions, and perhaps neither the economy nor the gain had proceeded upon strict principles of justice; but he had made them solely for the company's benefit, and mostly at the company's express command. He was above the motives imputed to him: he was, as many other men have been and are, constitutionally indifferent to money for himself.

As Francis—we must put this name first, for he was ever the most active and by far the most able of the trio—Clavering, and Monson constituted the majority of the council, they assumed all the powers of government, and for a time reduced Hastings, with his adherent Barwell, to the condition of a cypher. Of course they soon turned the government into an anarchy. They voted the immediate recall of Middleton from Oude, although Hastings declared that such a measure would be attended with the very worst effects, as proclaiming to the natives that the English authorities were no longer agreed among themselves, and that the government of Calcutta was falling into a state of revolution. Sujah Dowla, who in truth had no conception of a division of power, and who had always looked to Hastings, and to none other, was utterly confounded: and when Middleton showed him his letter of recall, he burst into tears, regarding it as the beginning of hostilities intended against himself. Other differences arose daily in the supreme council; and Hastings began to complain bitterly of the precipitancy and violence of the majority. At the beginning of December he wrote to one of the most powerful members of the court of directors:—"I am afraid you will see too close a resemblance in the disputes in which I am engaged to those between our late friend (Mr. Vansittart) and his council; but I trust that, by the benefit of his example and my own experience, and by a temper which, in spite of nature, I have brought under proper subjection, I shall be able to prevent the same dreadful extremities which attended the former quarrels . . . . Without friends, without

* Hastings insisted that the immemorial usage of the service had left the whole correspondence with the country powers in the hands of the governor; and that Mr. Middleton in that light could only receive his orders from, and address his letters to, him.

any kind of personal interest, I have but a discouraging prospect; but I am prepared for the worst, and shall return quietly and even contentedly to England the moment I hear of my recall, for there is no room for palliatives. I hope that my reputation will be spared; but if it is to be blackened for the sake of giving a fair colour to the severity which is to be exercised towards me, I will most certainly defend myself, and I am sure that I shall be able to do it to the shame of my calumniators."* And in a letter, dated the same day, to Lord North, the English premier, he said—"The public dispatches will inform you of the division which prevails in our councils. I do not mean in this letter to enter into a detail of its rise and progress, but will beg leave to refer to those dispatches for the particulars, and for the defence both of my measures and opinions. I shall here only assure your lordship that this unhappy difference did not spring from me, and that, had General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis brought with them the same conciliatory spirit which I had adopted, your lordship would not have been embarrassed with the appeals of a disjointed administration, nor the public business here retarded by discordant councils."†

One long-continued cause of quarrel was the Rohilla war. The majority declared that war to be monstrous, and the dispossessed and tyrannical tribes to be a brave but meek and inoffensive people, who had particular claims on the sympathies of generous minds. The Rohillas were what we have described them; and to their qualities remain to be added those of craft and treachery in a degree excessive even for India, and a bloodthirstiness like that of famishing tigers. But, though the war was to be reprobated and the Rohillas pitied,‡ though Champion and his brigade were to be instantly ordered to evacuate Rohilcund, the price of the war was to be poured into the company's exchequer, the Nabob of Oude was to be made to pay to the last rupee of what he had promised, and he was to be threatened and bullied into earlier payments than he had stipulated for. Thus, if they considered the war as diabolical work, they could still love the devil's money. In vain Hastings and Barwell remonstrated and protested; they were but two to three, and the determinations of Francis and his colleagues were carried forthwith into execution. Their behaviour vexed and terrified Sujah Dowla, and may have contributed to hasten his departure from the cares of this world, for he died a few months after their arrival, at the very beginning of the year 1775, dictating in his last moments a letter to Hastings to implore his friendship and protection for his son. This son, who took the name of Asoff-ul-Dowla, succeeded without opposition to Oude and its dependencies, which now included the country of the Rohillas. The majority in council were as harsh towards the son as they had been towards the father: they called upon him for prompt payment of all that was owing, and at the same time they declared that their treaty was dissolved by the death of the old nabob. Mr. Middleton had been succeeded at the court of Oude by Mr. Bristow, who took his orders from, and acted entirely in the spirit of, Francis, Clavering, and Monson. Bristow compelled the young nabob to accede to a treaty which contained as an essential article an incomparably more questionable arrangement than Hastings's engagement for the expulsion of the Rohillas. By this treaty the company guaranteed to Asoff-ul-Dowla the possession of Corah and Allahabad; but the nabob, in return, *ceded to the company the territory of Cheyte Sing, the Rajah of Benares, which was not his to cede, and which had been solemnly guaranteed to the rajah by Hastings.* The revenue of Cheyte Sing's territory thus alienated was estimated at 22,000,000 of rupees; but, as this took nothing out of the pocket of the young Nabob of Oude, he was bound in the same treaty to discharge all his father's debts and engagements whatsoever with the company, and to raise greatly the allowance to the company's brigade. Hastings indignantly refused to sanction this treaty, which never-

* Letter to Sulivan.

† Letter to Lord North, as given by Mr. Gleig.

‡ The real objects of pity in Rohilcund were rather the poor Hindus than the Rohillas.

theless met the warm approbation of the court of directors at home, who, as usual, looked at the money clauses without reflecting on the injustice of the conditions, or the ability or inability of the young nabob to pay.

The supreme council, as provided by the Regulating Act, asserted their authority over the other presidencies, and required from each of them a full report of its actual condition, political, financial, and commercial. The political status of the presidency of Bombay, which had long been so quiet and removed from the struggles of war, was at this moment as troublous as war and politics could make it, for the council there had entered upon the stormy and incomprehensible sea of Mahratta politics. The first temptation had been Salsette, that rich island that lay in their immediate neighbourhood, and that had been coveted for more than a hundred years by the English at Bombay. The directors at home had fully partaken in this desire, and in 1769 had greatly applauded an attempt made to obtain Salsette by negotiation with the Mahrattas. In 1773, after various other attempts had failed, advantage was taken of the confusion and civil war which ensued on the assassination of Narrain Row and the election of a new Peishwa; the presidency of Bombay dispatched a considerable force to Salsette, which carried the principal fort by assault and then took quiet possession of the island. To secure this valuable possession, and to obtain future advantages and cessions of territory in the neighbourhood of Surat, the presidency concluded a treaty with Ragoba, whom, for the occasion, they chose to consider legitimate Peishwa of the Mahrattas, who were themselves much divided in opinion whether the right or the might lay with Ragoba, or Futtee-Sing, or some other Sing or Row, and who were cutting one another's throats to decide the question. Ragoba, who counted upon English troops and sepoys as certain to give him the superiority, made a grant of Salsette, Bassein, and other places to the presidency; and the presidency sent Colonel Keating with 500 European infantry, 80 European artillerymen, 1400 sepoys, and 160 lascars, with a field-train and some heavier pieces, to assist Ragoba, who had himself a large army of horse.* On the 18th of May, 1775, Keating, on the plain of Arras, repulsed the attack of one of the Mahratta confederacies hostile to Ragoba; but he lost a considerable number of men, and found his future movements impeded by the discontents of the Peishwa's troops, who refused to cross the Nerbuddah until they should be paid their arrears. But in the month of July, when Ragoba had got money and had weakened the hostile confederacy by detaching some of its most powerful members, the road to Poona, which was a kind of Mahratta capital, seemed open to him and his English allies. At this point the supreme council at Calcutta judged it proper to strike in; and they did so with the same temper they had displayed on other occasions. They rated the members of the council of Bombay as if they had been a set of clerks or schoolboys; they called them to account for daring to enter upon such important negotiations and operations without their consent and sanction; they ordered them instantly to withdraw their troops and to recall their resident from Poona; and after this they sent an agent of their own to undertake treaties and pursue a line of policy the very opposite to that hitherto pursued. Colonel Upton, this new agent, did not reach Poona till the end of the year 1775. His instructions were to treat with the chiefs of the Mahratta confederacy, which the supreme council considered as likely to be the stronger party in the end; but he was also furnished with a letter from the council to Ragoba, in case he should prove the stronger. If the confederacy prevailed the letter might be burned, but if they should be defeated then it would serve as an introduction to negotiations with Ragoba. But Upton had been only a few days at Poona ere he found that the Mahrattas were much in the same uncertain state of mind as the supreme council. "For," said he, "the chiefs of this country are quite at a loss which side to take, and are waiting to see what the English

* Forbes, Oriental Memoirs. Mr. Forbes was at this time private secretary to Colonel Keating, the commanding officer.

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do."* The pertinacity of the Mahratta chiefs confederated against Ragoba, in insisting on the immediate restoration of Salsette, Bassein, and all that had been acquired by the recent treaty with Ragoba, removed the doubts and vacillations of the supreme council, who finally determined that the Peishwa recognised by the presidency of Bombay was to be recognised by them also as the rightful sovereign, and that the cause of Ragoba was to be supported "with the utmost vigour, and with a general exertion of the whole power of the English arms in India." But Ragoba gained nothing by this high-sounding resolution. His enemies jockeyed him when he thought himself close to the winning-post. Seeing that they would not be satisfied with less, the confederates agreed to yield Salsette and the small islands near it, upon which the majority of the supreme council agreed to abandon the cause of Ragoba and give up their claims to Bassein and the other territory which the lawful *then* and unlawful *now* Peishwa had given to the presidency of Bombay as part of the price of their assistance. A treaty to this effect was concluded by Colonel Upton; and then Ragoba, knowing that his life was in danger, prayed for an asylum in Bombay. That presidency granted his prayer, but the supreme council sent orders from Calcutta that they were not to receive him, as such a measure would give umbrage to the party with whom the treaty had been concluded; and Ragoba was therefore condemned for some time to lead a vagabond life.

While these events were passing in Western India, other hosts of Mahrattas descended into the valley of the Ganges from Agra and Delhi, and plundered the more northern parts of the dominions of the young Nabob of Oude, who is described as being as great a coward as his father, and destitute of ability, which his father was not. These devastations, which went to stop the current of supplies to a treasury which the supreme council had emptied, were accompanied by rumours of a new coalition between the emperor, the Mahrattas, the Seiks, the Rohillas, and other Afghan tribes, for the purpose of conquering the whole of Oude. The plans adopted by the supreme council to break or resist this league were not very wise or consistent, and Asoff-ul-Dowla owed his safety for the present to quarrels which broke out among the members of the coalition, and to the poverty and indecision of Shah Alum. In all consultations in council the voice the least heeded was that of the governor-general. Irritated and hopeless of any change there, Hastings remitted a load of papers, said by him to be complete and literal copies of his correspondence with Mr. Middleton, to Lord North, in vindication of his own character; and announced to his friends in England that he should certainly return home by the next ship unless he received the approbation of the court of directors to his past conduct. The hostile majority continued to heap accusations against him. "These men," said he, "began their opposition on the second day of our meeting. The symptoms of it betrayed themselves on the very first. They condemned me before they could have read any part of the proceedings, and all the study of the public records since, all the informations they have raked up out of the dirt of Calcutta, and the encouragement given to the greatest villains in the province, are for the sole purpose of finding grounds to vilify my character and undo all the labours of my government."* Francis, Clavering, and Monson had got hold of the great informer or arch-devil of Bengal, the notorious Nuncomar, and were now inciting him to collect evidence and bring charges against Hastings, as Hastings had encouraged him, by command of the secret committee of the court of directors, to produce charges against Mohammed Reza Khan.† Knowing as he did the depth of the craft and malignity of that Hindu's nature, Hastings had sufficient reason to feel disquieted. "Nuncomar," said he, "whom I have thus long protected and supported, whom against

* Letter to the council as quoted by Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.

* Letter to Sulivan, dated 25th February, 1775, as given by Gleig, Memoirs of Warren Hastings.

† See ante, pp. 141, 142.

my nature I have cherished like a serpent till he has stung me, is now in close connexion with my adversaries, and the prime mover of all their intrigues; but he will sting them too, or I am mistaken, before he quits them. I have expelled him from my gates, and while I live will never re-admit him."* At the prompting of Nuncomar, Francis and his friends called in the further aid of a Hindu woman, the Ranee or Rana of Burdwan, whom Hastings had turned out of Calcutta as an intriguing, violent woman. The Ranee, with proper assistance, sent in circumstantial charges, accusing Hastings of extorting 1,500,000 rupees; his banyan, or native secretary, who was resident in Burdwan, and others of his servants, of extorting a great deal more; the fabulous total being set down by the Ranee and her accountants and advisers at considerably above nine millions of rupees. She produced witnesses to prove some of the facts; but they were Indian witnesses, and as such entitled to no credit. Upon examination the hostile majority felt obliged to drop these accusations. Nevertheless in the presence of Hastings they proceeded to vote certain honours and distinctions to the Ranee. At this gross insult he broke up the council, which as its president he conceived he had a clear right to do. The trio then passed the resolution that a vote of adjournment could be passed only by the majority, voted one of themselves into the president's chair, and continued their sittings. The next great charge they entertained was that Hastings had appropriated to himself two-thirds of the salary of the Phousdar or governor of Hooghly — a place which had once been held by Nuncomar. Hastings was ready to refer this business to the English judges, but he denied the competency of the council to take it up; and it seems to us that no man in his senses, however conscious he might be of his innocence, would have submitted to the judgment of three implacable enemies, who had determined that they were omnipotent in their majority. He was supported, as on all other occasions, by Mr. Barwell. The trio insisted on the right of proceeding. He then declared that he would not sit there to be confronted with such vile accusers, or suffer a judicial inquiry into his conduct at a board of which he was president; and as president, as governor-general, he again dissolved the council. But one of the trio again took the chair, and the business was continued by themselves when Hastings and Barwell were gone. This charge was even worse supported than those made by the revengeful Ranee. Two letters of most doubtful authenticity and two *Indian* witnesses were all the evidence produced. But other charges came flying in to the supreme council, for the great informer was indefatigable in his calling. "The trumpet," said Hastings, "has been sounded, and the whole host of informers will soon crowd to Calcutta with their complaints and ready depositions. Nuncomar holds his durbar in complete state, sends for zemindars and their vakeels, coaxing and threatening them for complaints, which no doubt he will get in abundance, *besides what he forges himself*. The system which they have laid down for conducting their affair is, as I am told, after this manner. The General rummages the consultations for disputable matter, with the aid of old Fowke. Colonel Monson receives, and I have been assured descends even to solicit, accusations. *Francis writes.*" [And with what gall the pen of Junius could write, or, if there be any unconvinced of the identity, what gall Francis put in his avowed letters, pamphlets, and speeches, is pretty well known.] "Goring is employed as their agent with Mohammed Reza Khan, and Fowke with Nuncomar. . . . . Was it for this that the legislature of Great Britain formed this new system of government for Bengal, and armed it with powers extending to every part of the British empire in India?"* Three or four days after writing these words Hastings informed the same correspondents that one of the principal native witnesses had waited upon him and affirmed with the most solemn

* Letter to Sullivan, dated 25th February, 1775, as given by Gleig, Memoirs of Warren Hastings.

* Letter to Mr. Graham and Colonel Mac Leane, dated 25th March, 1775, as given by Gleig.

asseverations that Nuncomar, Mr. Fowke, and others, were guilty of conspiracy against him; that this native had offered to produce evidence to that effect; and that, consequently, he (Hastings) had resolved on the prosecution of Fowke, Nuncomar, and the rest. And he accordingly sought redress from the judges of the newly elected supreme court, where his friend and schoolfellow Impey presided. The judges, after a long examination of the case, made Nuncomar and Fowke give bail, and bound over the governor-general to prosecute them for a conspiracy. Immediately after this General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis made a visit of honour to Nuncomar, a compliment which had never been paid him before either by themselves or by the members of any preceding administration.

But on the 11th of March, a month previous to his appearance before the judges, and a week or ten days previous to the visit of the native witness to Hastings, the great informer had accused the governor-general of procuring the acquittal of Mohammed Reza Khan and Shitab Roy for large sums of money; and had further accused him of accepting or extorting more than three millions and a half of rupees for the appointment of the Begum and of Nuncomar's own son Goordass. These charges had all the wildness of an Oriental fiction; but the majority had not only determined that they should be discussed, but had even, upon evidence which ought not to have been allowed to injure the character of a dog, declared Hastings guilty of one fraction of them, and called upon him to refund two lacs of rupees, not, however, to the Begum at Moorshedabad, from whom it was said he had received them, but to the company's treasury at Calcutta! The visit of the trio was intended to support —what the mighty Himalaya itself could not have propped up—the character and veracity of Nuncomar, and to intimate that the governor-general's proceedings with the judges were intended to get rid of a troublesome witness whom Hastings had refused to meet in the council-chamber, or to answer. The war was thus widened, inasmuch as the majority of the supreme council considered the majority of the supreme court of justice as the allies and confederates of the governor-general and Mr. Barwell. The Begum, who had denied a letter said to be hers and produced in evidence against Hastings, was set down as another enemy by the trio, who determined to deprive her of the care of her son the young nabob, and of the management of his household and sixteen annual lacs. Every way the battle thickened and became a combat *à outrance*, in which all the generous feelings of the national character seem to have been suppressed by all the English part of the combatants.

The charge presented against Nuncomar and Mr. Joseph Fowke, and for which they had been held to bail, was simply that they had headed a conspiracy and forced a native to write a petition against the governor-general and some of his servants; but another and a far more serious charge, which had long been hanging over the head of the rajah, now burst upon him like a thunder-clap. About five years before the arrival of Sir Elijah Impey and the new English court, which was bound by the Regulating Act to administer justice according to the law of England, Nuncomar had been charged with the crime of forgery by one Mohunpersaud, a native and a Hindu like himself. The dark business had been taken up in the Mayor's court at Calcutta, over which Hastings then presided. This court, according to an act of George II., was bound to administer English law; but no proper judges or law-officers were appointed then, either by the crown or by the company; the governor's functionaries made a medley of English law, Hindu law, and Mohammedan law; and the governor himself often interfered in the proceedings and decisions of the court. This Mayor's court considered the charge so grave, and the evidence so good, that it arrested and committed Nuncomar; but Hastings, who had been ordered by the secret committee of the court of directors to avail himself of the services of Nuncomar, ordered that the then half-convicted villain should be released, and the Mayor's court had released Nuncomar accordingly. As there was then no other criminal court to resort to but this one in which Hastings presided, and as Hastings had interposed

between the law and the offender, neither the prosecutor Mohunpersaud nor any other native took further steps, or could have taken them before the arrival of the supreme court. Besides, the forged instrument was kept in the Mayor's court, and could not be procured from thence. Hastings, who evidently feared Nuncomar almost as much as he hated him—Hastings, who knew by experience the malice, ingenuity, falsehood, and remorselessness of the Hindu, and the little trust to be put in the candour, wisdom, and justice of the court of directors, may very possibly have kept this forged document as a shield of defence for himself, and as a cutting sword against Nuncomar: but with this intention, or with this retention of the document by Hastings's Mayor's court, the new supreme court, over which Sir Elijah Impey presided, had nothing to do. The supreme court sat for the first time towards the end of October, 1774. The records and papers of the Mayor's court were demanded, and were delivered up to it. Among the papers was found the document wherein Nuncomar was alleged to have committed his act of forgery. The supreme court restored the document to the party entitled to it, thus putting that party in a condition to proceed against the rajah. This, it must be attentively noted, was months before Nuncomar, under the encouragement of Francis, Clavering, and Monson, preferred his charges against Hastings. It seems proved by every possible variety of evidence that the supreme court could neither have tried the forgery case *sooner* than it did nor *later* than it did; and that, with the startling coincidence of time and facts (which years afterwards was turned to such account by Francis and the other numerous enemies of Hastings and Impey, and which made so deep an impression on the public mind in England), proceeded from natural and almost inevitable causes and circumstances, over which neither the supreme court collectively, nor Sir Elijah Impey individually, had any sort of control. It further appears that Impey, though subsequently selected out of that body as the sole object of prosecution, had less to do with the measures which preceded the trial and condemnation of Nuncomar than any one of the four members of the supreme court. Judge Chambers did indeed suggest that the indictment should be laid under an act of Queen Elizabeth, when forgery was not held as a capital offence; but the other three judges all agreed that the said act of Elizabeth was obsolete; that the act of George II. and the Regulating Act left them no choice, binding them to administer English law in Calcutta as it was administered in England; and that, therefore, the indictment of Nuncomar must be laid under the act which made forgery an offence punishable with death. The whole amount of Chambers's difference of opinion was this, and no more. This old associate of Dr. Samuel Johnson sat on the bench during the whole trial, concurred in the sentence, and approved of whatever was done. It was not Impey, but Judge Lemaistre, who issued the warrant upon which Nuncomar was arrested and thrown into the common prison of Calcutta. Nuncomar's arrest was on the 6th of May, 1775, when the party injured by the forger had reproduced the charge—according to some at the secret instigation of Hastings; according to others, from there now seeming, for the first time, to be a prospect of obtaining inpartial justice. On the 9th of May, three days after Nuncomar's imprisonment, Francis, Clavering, and Monson, by their right as a majority, dismissed the Begum from her office, and gave it to Nuncomar's son Goordass, who hitherto had been acting under her. And, as if to show their contempt for the judges of the supreme court, or to influence opinion by testifying still farther their esteem for the greatest scoundrel in all India, the trio visited Nuncomar in his prison, going thither with pomp and preparation, and the General (Clavering) being attended by his aide-de-camp Captain Thornton. "The visit to Nuncomar," said Hastings, "when he was to be prosecuted for a conspiracy, and the elevation of his son when the old gentleman was in gaol and *in a fair way to be hanged*, were bold expedients. I doubt if the people in England will approve of such barefaced declarations of their connexions with such a scoundrel, or such attempts to impede and frustrate the course of justice. Neither can I sup-

pose that the dismission of Munny Begum, for the sake of carrying a point of party with which she has no concern, will be thought consistent with justice, honour, or common decency."* These reproaches were well grounded—in each particular the conduct of the trio was indefensible, gross, indecent—but it was indecent too, it was horrible in Hastings, considering the position in which he stood relatively to Nuncomar, and his own rank and station in India, to hint at the gibbet before the man was tried.

On the 18th of May Hastings revoked a discretionary power he had given his friends and agents in England, Mr. Graham and Colonel Mac Leane, in letters dated the 27th of March, declaring that, whatever advices the first packet from Leadenhall-street might bring, he was resolved to stay where he was "to see the issue of his appeal, believing it impossible that men whose actions were so frantic could be permitted to remain in charge of so important a trust."† The trio made a great show of wrath at the arrest and imprisonment of the great informer, a degradation awful in Brahmins' eyes, and to which no native of his rank had ever been subjected: they remonstrated, they interfered with the judges, and the judges told them to attend to their own business. The trio then protested against the right of the judges to commit on any such charge; and demanded that Nuncomar should be liberated on bail. The judges replied that forgery was a capital crime, and not bailable, by the laws of England; that by the last act the laws of England were established in Calcutta, and consequently that the prisoner must remain in gaol until the day of trial. When that black day arrived, Nuncomar was brought before the supreme court and a jury of Englishmen. A native merchant of Calcutta, the original accuser, and other witnesses, deposed to facts, and there was an accumulation of evidence to prove that, six years before, the prisoner had committed forgery on, or in, a private bond. Nuncomar had witnesses to swear against nearly everything that the witnesses for the prosecution swore to, so that the deliberations of the jury were little more than a weighing of probabilities and chances as to the side where the perjury lay. The great informer's knowledge and tactics did not extend beyond this producing of witnesses, who were always to be bought by any party who had money or power, and for the prosecution as well as for the defence, but he was assisted by counsel—by two English barristers—and so far from being unacquainted with the nature of the English laws relating to forgery, and with the dangerous predicament in which he stood, he was very well informed as to those laws, and knew perfectly well that life and death depended upon the verdict of the jury. In fact the particular law in question, as well as other criminal laws of England, had been applied in Calcutta before the establishment of the supreme court, and before the passing of the Regulating Act, which did but confirm and provide for the due execution of the Act of Geo. II. (which Act declared the law of England to be the law of Calcutta and of our other actual possessions in India). As far back as 1764 one Raddachund Mettre, a Hindu of rank like Nuncomar, had been condemned to death for forgery; and, though he had received the king's pardon, other natives *had been hanged* for the same crime years before the trial and conviction of Nuncomar.* Nuncomar's witnesses

* Letter to Graham and Mac Leane, dated 18th May, 1775.

† Letter as given by Gleig. Hastings adds,—"Good God! what will be said if it be asked with authority what the council of India have done with the vast powers which were assigned them? In the course of the last seven months they have worried their chief, and kept every office and business of the state wholly impeded." In a preceding letter he says that absolutely nothing had been done in the way of business for the last six months, except the very little which the majority of the council had allowed him to do himself at the revenue board. To Lord North he wrote on the 27th of March, the same day on which he sent the discretionary power to Graham and Mac Leane —"I now most earnestly entreat that your lordship—for on you, I presume, it finally rests—will free me from the state I am in, either by my immediate recall, or by the confirmation of the trust and authority of which you have hitherto thought me deserving.....The meanest drudge, who owes his daily subsistence to daily labour, enjoys a condition of happiness compared to mine, while I am doomed to share the responsibility of measures of which I disapprove, and to be an idle spectator of the ruin which I cannot avert."

* Examination of Mr. Barwell on Hastings's

were outnumbered by the witnesses for the prosecution, among whom were included most of the principal native inhabitants of Calcutta. The deed now produced in court was held to be a damning proof of guilt; and the whole tenor of the man's life was against him. All the judges concurred; the jury returned a plain and unqualified verdict of guilty; and Sir Elijah Impey, as the organ of the court, pronounced sentence of death. When Raddachund Mettre lay under sentence of death for forgery, the principal native inhabitants of Calcutta drew up and signed an earnest petition in his favour; but now no such step was taken by the natives; neither the Hindus nor the Mahommedans, neither the English residents of the Francis party nor those of the Hastings party recommended the prisoner to mercy, or prayed for a suspension of the execution: the only party or person that petitioned for Nuncomar was Nuncomar himself, and his petition was never presented to the judges, but was burned by the hands of the common hangman as a libel on the supreme court—and this burning was done not by order of the supreme court, who never saw the petition; not by order of Hastings, who could carry no measure; but by the trio, Francis, Clavering, and Monson, who controlled everything that was done in council, and who were pretending to be extremely anxious to save and serve the rajah! These men had seized upon all the powers of government; they had repeatedly set the authority of Hastings at defiance, voting another president to fill his chair; they had interfered in matters of far greater import; they had broken treaties and alliances of his making; and had made treaties and compacts of their own; they had declared to his own face and to the court of directors, and still higher authorities at home, that Hastings was an embezzler, a plunderer, a conspirator, and that they believed him to be capable of the darkest crimes, and Nuncomar wholly innocent of the two charges —of the conspiracy on which he was admitted to bail, and of the forgery for which he was to be hanged;—they continued to defy his authority after the event, as before it; and everything goes to prove that if they had been seriously bent on preserving the old rajah's life they might have preserved it. If they had been animated by the generous feelings and the enthusiastic regard for justice which Francis afterwards laid claim to for himself and his colleagues, they would have risked hostile collision and actual civil war in the streets of Calcutta rather than have permitted the execution. In a very short time they did risk that extremity. In the present case they seem to have felt that the death of Nuncomar would give them the opportunity of proclaiming to the world (unacquainted with the particulars) that Hastings had precipitated the arrest, trial, and execution of a troublesome witness whose charges he could not answer, in order to terrify other witnesses from appearing against him. And to this account they certainly began to turn the old rajah as soon as he was dead.

We reserve any further remarks upon this trial and execution for a future period, when we will take a comprehensive view of the whole subject: for the present it will suffice to say that Nuncomar was left for immediate execution, and that he was hanged on the 5th of August, 1775.*

trial. Mr. Barwell deposed that he had himself presided in the court which condemned these men.

* When we first wrote the first part of these judicial proceedings, we were deceived by the trust we placed on the authority of certain writers who were supposed to be well acquainted with the whole subject, and who ought certainly to have been so from the position they had occupied and the opportunities they had enjoyed. An attentive reconsideration of the subject, with an examination of documents both printed and manuscript, have convinced us that our trust was misplaced. Hence the important alterations in our present text. We have now before us a great body of Indian correspondence, comprising many original letters of Sir Elijah Impey, and many letters of Mr. Hastings, not published in Mr. Gleig's Life of the Governor-General. We have also in our possession 'MS. Notes and Documents relating to the Administration of Justice in India by Sir Elijah Impey, from 1774 to 1784, compiled from original letters, official vouchers, and other authentic sources, by his son Elijah Barwell Impey, Esq., M.A., Faculty Student of Christ Church, Oxford. In answer to the misstatements of T. B. Macaulay, Esq.'

And, in nearly every instance, we have compared the copies, extracts, &c. contained in this manuscript with the original documents.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE majority of the council knew nothing if they did not know the conduct of Nuncomar towards Mohammed Reza Khan, yet they had supported and courted the old Hindu notwithstanding those transactions. Now, however, that the Hindu was hanged, they chose to consider his rival as the most trustworthy man in Bengal; and they proposed that he should have not only the charge of the young nabob's household instead of Goordass, whom they themselves had so recently promoted, but also the higher office of dewan, which he had held previously to his downfall and arrest in 1772. They proposed that he should have the superintendence of the native penal courts as the naibs had had before, and that the Nizamut Adaulut should be removed from Calcutta back to Moorshedabad. This latter measure went wholly to destroy the achievement which Hastings had so much prided himself upon, and which he considered indispensable to the preservation of the English government in Bengal; but the three against two carried their proposals into execution by right of their majority, and in contempt of the opinion and remonstrances of the governor-general. In the same temper the trio proceeded to condemn and destroy Hastings's recently introduced system of revenue and finance, a system not without faults, but freer from them than the practice which had preceded it, and far less tyrannical than the old plan of collection under the native princes. Hastings sent home complaints and representations, but these now were more frequently addressed to the prime minister than to the court of directors, of whose opinion and approbation he was long uncertain, as he reasonably might be, seeing with what rapidity they could change their plans, and with what ease they could condemn in one dispatch what they had approved of and applauded in another. He continued to represent that his arms were tied, and that the greater part of the public business was at a standstill; that the judges of the supreme court were insulted and outraged by the majority of the council, and were only hindered from coming to an open rupture by his endeavours, and their own regard to public order.

Francis, who led Clavering and Monson by the nose, and speechified and wrote them out of their senses, was not a man to care much for the sharp horns of this dilemma. If Mohammed Reza Khan was worthy of trust, honour, and employment, then was Nuncomar, who had sworn against his life, the worst of villains; if Nuncomar was worthy of the sympathy which had been bestowed upon him, and of the visits of honour paid to him in his prison by the members of the council, then was it monstrous in the same men to court, applaud, and promote his life-long rival and foe, Mohammed Reza Khan, as soon as Nuncomar was hanged. We have not been over lenient to Hastings in dealing with the manner in which he executed the dishonouring and iniquitous orders received from Leadenhall-street; but we conceive that it would be a gigantic mistake to admit that Francis had purer motives or a more delicate conscience than the governor, or to believe that those who became the censors and afterwards the public accusers of Warren Hastings were not quite capable of doing worse things than any he did, and that too from mean and personal motives, which never influenced the conduct of the governor. Their conduct with regard to Oude, and the whole course of their policy during the short time of their pre-potency, totally

disprove their claims to moderation, magnanimity, and justice. If they opposed the extension of the war with the Afghan tribes, with the Mahrattas or other native powers, they avowedly did so not from any sense of its injustice, but from their own unmanly fears and selfish calculations that the war would cost more than the prizes of victory would be worth, if, contrary to their deep-rooted belief, victory should attend upon the bold plans of Hastings. Without being at war they would fain have made all the subjected and allied parts of India pay war-taxes, even as they exacted them from the young Nabob of Oude. While the governor was spending in the public service the small private fortune he had accumulated during his long residence in India, and from services which for many years had never been unattended by excessive toil and by great personal danger, Philip Francis, a man new to the country, who had never known either toil or danger, was hoarding and scraping, jobbing and speculating, and resorting to all those means suggested by a keen intellect, and by the passion of avarice, which enabled him to return to Europe with a very large fortune.

But on the 25th of September, 1776, the majority was reduced to an equality by the death of Colonel Monson. There thus remained only two on either side, but the casting-vote of the governor-general gave him the superiority. "It has restored me the constitutional authority of my station," he wrote the very next day, to the minister, "but without absolute necessity I shall not think it proper to use it with that effect which I should give it were I sure of support from home." It appears, however, that he at once used his re-acquired authority with boldness and effect, deciding all measures by his casting-vote, and leaving Clavering and Francis to declaim and protest as they had recently left him to do. They had, however, sufficient influence in the court of directors to procure a strong reprimand. On the 4th of July, 1777, the directors wrote:—"To our concern we find that no sooner was our council reduced, by the death of Colonel Monson, to a number which rendered the president's casting-vote of consequence to him, than he exercised it to invest himself with an improper degree of power in the business of the revenue, which he could never have expected from other authority." But the storm in Leadenhall-street did not disperse with this little gale. It will be remembered that Hastings, in a moment of despair, had announced to his friends Graham and Mac Leane that he thought of resigning. Colonel Mac Leane, after keeping the letter by him for many months, showed it to the chairman, deputy-chairman, and another director, and upon their report the resignation was formally accepted and a successor to Hastings was chosen in the person of Mr. Wheler. Further, the court resolved that General Clavering, as senior member of the council, should occupy the chair till Mr. Wheler arrived. This new-named governor-general was even presented to the king and accepted as such. The news of these proceedings reached Calcutta and threw everything into fresh confusion. Hastings declared that the court of directors could not accept what he had never given; that his letter about resigning had been revoked by a subsequent letter; that Colonel Mac Leane had no authority to show a letter written in the confidence of friendship, and expressive merely of the feelings of the moment; that nothing in that letter amounted to a tender of his resignation, and that, even if it had contained anything of that sort, it was annulled by the second letter, written not many weeks after, and strongly declaring his intention to remain at his post. He refused to submit to General Clavering's taking the chair, and he summoned the council to assemble under his own presidency as before. On the other hand, Clavering insisted on his right, and summoned the council in his own name. Barwell attended the summons of Hastings, Francis that of Clavering; and thus there were two councils or parties, each claiming the supreme authority. The general and Francis met at the usual council-table; Hastings and Barwell at the board of revenue. The general immediately proceeded to take the oaths as governor-general *ad interim*, and to deliberate and preside. Hastings requested the judges

of the supreme court to attend him at the revenue-board to give him their opinion. The judges met immediately, but to no purpose; for the general had got possession of all the dispatches from Europe, and refused to deliver them up. Hastings assured the judges, in writing, that if, upon inspection of the papers, they should find any act of his from which his resignation could be deduced, he would immediately vacate the chair. Clavering and Francis then enclosed copies of some of the dispatches upon which, they said, their claims were indubitably and immovably grounded: they did not offer to abide by the decision of the judges, but they agreed to suspend the execution of their orders as a council till the judges had given their opinion. In the mean while Clavering demanded the keys of the fort and treasury, and wrote a letter to the commandant of the fort requiring his obedience; and Hastings, not idle, clenched the keys with a firmer grasp, sent opposite orders to the commandant, and showed the fullest determination of meeting force by force. The sword of civil war seemed half unsheathed. But the military man cooled at the sight of this unexpected boldness in the civilian. The judges were most decisively and unanimously of opinion that it would be illegal in General Clavering to assume the chair or otherwise persevere in his course; and thereupon both the general and Francis succumbed and wrote a letter to the judges agreeing to acquiesce in their judgment. Francis, however, absented himself when the council met under the presidency of Hastings, and would not apologise for his absence. With his decided majority, that is to say himself, with his casting vote, and Mr. Barwell against General Clavering, Hastings now carried a resolution that the general, by taking the oaths as governor-general, &c., had actually vacated his seat as senior counsellor, and could no longer sit at the board in any capacity. But here the judges refused to go along with him, and Hastings was compelled to submit to a compromise dictated by the judges. The hostile parties consented to refer their several claims to England for decision, and in the mean time to leave everything at Calcutta as it stood before the arrival of the packet.*

Mr. Middleton was sent again to reside at Oude, and Mr. Bristow, who had been nominated by the trio, was recalled; Mr. Francis Fowke, the son of Mr. Joseph Fowke, was recalled from Benares, and other changes were made in favour of Hastings's friends. Colonel Monson's place in the council was soon supplied by Mr. Wheler, who, though he came out as governor-general, consented to fill an inferior post, and commonly voted with Francis; but before that party could recover their confidence it was again reduced to a minority by the loss of General Clavering. On the 22nd of November, 1777, Hastings wrote to a private friend: —"The death of Sir John Clavering has produced a state of quiet in our councils which I shall endeavour to preserve during the remainder of the time which may be allotted to me. The interests of the company will benefit by it; that is to say, they will not suffer, as they have done, by the effects of a divided administration."

It was high time that there should be more unanimity, for danger was approaching on various sides. Most of the Mahratta chiefs who had been parties to the treaty with Colonel Upton were already weary of their bargain; fresh intrigues and combinations were forming at Poona, and a French ship had put into one of the Mahratta ports, and a French agent was reported to be living at Poona and exercising great influence in that capital. The war in our American colonies was raging, and, as Frenchmen of name and rank were taking part in it without any declaration of war from the court of Versailles to the court of St. James's, it was not imagined that the French would be very scrupulous in India, where, in fact, they had never once ceased their intrigues since the treaty of Paris had restored Pondicherry and allowed them their factory at Chandernagore. Besides, every letter from England complained of the interference of France in the American quarrel, and announced hostilities with

* Hastings's Letters to Mr. Sykes and Lord North.

that power as inevitable. The presidency of Bombay, who were nearest to the scene of Mahratta intrigue, and likely to be most affected by it, wrote alarming letters to the supreme council at Calcutta, and recommended a new alliance with Ragoba, in order to anticipate the designs of the French and the Mahratta chiefs. They were eager for the recovery of Bassein and the other territory which had been given up by Colonel Upton; and their last advices informed them that the court of directors disapproved *in toto* of that treaty, and thought that much more advantageous terms, *i. e.* more territory and more revenue, might have been secured by supporting Ragoba. Hastings, too, disapproved that treaty—the work of Clavering, Monson, and Francis—which he would have prevented at the time if he had been able. The Mahrattas had scarcely performed one article of it when the Chevalier de St. Lubin arrived at Poona with letters and presents from Louis XVI. The governor-general, who had long been accustomed to reflect on the best means the English possessed of defending their Indian empire, and the most likely means the French had for recovering their ascendancy, had come to the conclusion that our greatest danger would proceed from a union of the French with the Mahrattas, and that any attempt of that kind ought to be met on the instant, and, if possible, prevented by arms, leagues, combinations, by the utmost exercise of our power and policy. At this critical juncture he received intelligence that there was a fresh quarrel among the Mahratta chiefs at Poona, who constituted a sort of regency; and that a powerful faction headed by Baboo had resolved to declare for Ragoba, and had actually applied to the English at Bombay for assistance. It appeared also that the presidency of Bombay had committed itself to this party by promises or encouragements, and that its territories would be in danger if the faction opposed to Baboo and Ragoba should prevail in this new contest.

Without hesitation Hastings proposed in council that every assistance should be given in men and money, and that an army should be sent from Calcutta to Bombay. He was supported by Barwell, and opposed by Francis and Wheler, who protested as usual; but, as usual, the governor-general's casting vote settled the matter. Ten lacs of rupees were immediately sent to Bombay by bills; and on the 23rd of February orders were issued for assembling an army at Culpee, on the east bank of the Hooghly river, and about thirty-three miles in a straight line below Calcutta. There then arose a fresh dispute in council as to the properest way of sending these troops on their long journey: if they went by sea they would have to go round nearly the whole of the immense peninsula of India, and it was not the proper season for such a voyage, nor were there transports to carry the troops, or ships of war to give them convoy: to make such a march by land was a bold idea that had not yet presented itself to the mind of any Anglo-Indian, soldier or statesman; but Hastings, who had studied the capabilities of the native troops, who had a high reliance on their steadiness and powers of endurance, and who had long wished for an opportunity to show the might of the Company to some of the princes and potentates of the interior, who, from the remoteness of their situation, had hitherto remained strangers to it, or but very insufficiently informed upon it, after consulting with some officers, confidently proposed the land march right across the peninsula—a peninsula vast enough to be called a continent—through the hostile and unknown regions that intervened between the banks of the Ganges and the Gulf of Cambay. Francis and Wheler again protested: according to some accounts, even his constant echo, Barwell, was silent or doubtful on this occasion, and Hastings ordered the hazardous march on his own responsibility.* The army was composed of six native battalions, a corps of native cavalry, furnished by the Nabob of Oude, and a company of native artillery, altogether

* Captain Williams, of the Bengal army, Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Native Infantry, from its first formation in 1757 to 1796.—Hastings, however, says in his letters that Mr. Barwell, whose advice he had taken in all his measures, concurred also in this, while Francis and Wheler opposed and protested.

amounting to 103 European officers, 6624 native troops, with 31,000 followers, including the bazar, carriers of baggage, servants of officers, and families of sepoys; and this host had to march upwards of 1000 miles through countries where nearly every kind of obstacle had to be overcome. The command was intrusted to Colonel Leslie, who did not prove worthy of executing so daring and brilliant a conception. Except the officers, there were no British or Europeans of any other nation. The army began its march on the 12th of June, 1778; and it had not proceeded far when a letter from Mr. Baldwin, the English consul at Cairo, brought to Calcutta the news that war had been declared both in London and Paris. Francis and Wheler then insisted that the army should be recalled, as they considered that Bengal was as likely to be attacked by the French as Bombay, and as some great difficulties were already presenting themselves to the advance of the troops; but Hastings insisted that the army should go on, and that the river Hooghly, Calcutta, and Bengal could be very well defended without it. Clive himself could not have kicked down obstacles and projected delays, or have acted in all respects with more determination than did Hastings on this trying occasion. He seized Chandernagore, which had not been re-fortified, and all the French factories in Bengal: he sent orders to the presidency of Madras to occupy Pondicherry instantly—but, in infraction of the last treaty of peace, Pondicherry had been re-fortified, and could not be taken without a desperate siege: he threw up strong works near Calcutta; and, still further to impede the approach to that capital, he collected a vast number of vessels of all kinds, shapes, and riggings, and improvised a regular marine establishment; he raised nine new battalions of sepoys and a numerous corps of native artillery; and, being thus perfectly at ease in this quarter, he directed his attention to the westward, to the march of the army and to the proceedings at Poona and Bombay.

Previously to the first move of the troops he had sent letters and presents to several of the native princes through whose territories the army must pass; he had almost settled the preliminaries of a treaty and close alliance with the Mahratta ruler, or Rajah, of Berar, whose territories were most extensive and about midway between the Bay of Bengal and the western coast, and whose power and consideration were equal to those enjoyed by any Mahratta prince of the time. Colonel Leslie had been instructed to conciliate and captivate the goodwill of the rulers and people of all the districts through which his line of march lay; but, as he was to go on at all events, he was to fight his way where he could not win it by gentle means. The army met with a feeble resistance in crossing the river Jumna from a Mahratta chief called Ballajee. This chief also engaged the young Rajah of Bondilcund to oppose it, and as the forces advanced in Bondilcund they were frequently harassed and occasionally saw their supplies of provisions intercepted; but a spirited and successful attack made on their principal post, not far from Chatterpoor, completely disconcerted the rajah and Ballajee, and compelled them to retire to a respectful distance. After this action Leslie was joined by an elder brother of the rajah, who laid claim to his throne, and by several other Bondilcund chiefs—for, go where they would, the English found factions, disputed successions, and other mad contentions to tempt their ambition and furnish means for its gratification. Hastings, however, did not wish Leslie to engage for the present in these particular contests. "The rest of the march," wrote the governor-general, "will be easy and creditable if Colonel Leslie does not entangle himself in the domestic contests of the two brothers, to which his inducements are strong and his provocations great. He was on the 30th of July at Chatterpoor, where he had been for some time detained for the repair of his carriages. He writes that he was then on the point of leaving it. . . . . I shall be satisfied if he advances. I do not wish him to be in a hurry."* But Colonel Leslie was less in a hurry than Hastings desired; having reached Rajaghur, a principal city of Bondilcund, "the Country of Diamonds,"

* Letter to Sulivan, dated 18th August, 1778.

on the 17th of August, he halted there for a long time, and entered into various private negotiations with the pretender and other chiefs of that country, in doing which it was suspected that he had an eye to his own private interest. But the delay is certainly in part attributable to the indecision of the presidency of Bombay, under whose orders Leslie had been told to consider himself from the moment he passed the Jumna. It is true that embarrassing incidents had occurred at Poona—that the treaty with Ragoba and the cause of that chief had not run so smoothly as the Bombay politicians had anticipated; but still their conduct must be considered as a near approach to the very perfection of absurdity. They sent an order to Leslie to suspend his march, alleging their apprehensions of the risk and expense, and the dissent of two of the members of their council from the original plan. "A strange reason this for a majority!" exclaimed contemptuously the governor-general of Bengal, whose majority depended on his own voice, and whose ears constantly rung with the dissents and protests of Francis and Wheler. Two or three days after this first order the Bombay magnates sent Leslie another order, revoking the former one and pressing for the rapid advance of the army. More than one familiar proverb will explain the condition in which Leslie found himself. Of a weak and irresolute character himself, and probably not entirely free from the motives imputed to him of *money-making* and *present-seeking*, he remained where he was in Bondilcund, justifying his inactivity by showing that an army which was to advance from Bombay to meet him had not taken the field, and that that presidency had done nothing to avail themselves of the distractions at Poona, or to pave the way for his advance at the points where it would become most dangerous. On their side the presidency of Bombay excused their inactivity by representing that the leading members of their party at Poona, from whom assistance was expected, had been scattered or put into prison, and that there was no possibility of calculating the chances of Ragoba's success. Hastings thought it necessary to recall Colonel Leslie to Bengal, and to confide the command of the army to Lieutenant-Colonel Goddard, a much more active and enterprising officer, who had been his second in command. By the same courier he wrote letters to the Rajah of Bondilcund and his competitors, disavowing the acts of Colonel Leslie, and declaring all his treaties and agreements invalid. It is possible that the loitering commander might have been brought to account at Calcutta for some of his bargains; but he died on the 3rd of October, several days before the sentence of recall could reach him.* Goddard, raised to the rank of full colonel, was immediately freed from the orders which had tied the hands and feet of his predecessor: he was instantly released from the authority of the presidency of Bombay, which might interrupt, but could not promote his success. He forthwith quitted "the detested land of Bondilcund," and, taking the road through Malwa, he continued his march a long while in peace, ease, and plenty, without experiencing or expecting any of the many impediments which Leslie had so long complained of.† He soon crossed the Nerbudda, and reached the city of Nagpoor, which Hastings with a prospective glance declared to be the exact and proper centre of all our possessions and connexions in India! By the 1st of December Goddard had established friendly relations with the Mahrattas of Berar. Here he received dispatches from Bombay acquainting him that they had at last put an army in motion for Poona, and expected that he would meet it in the neighbourhood of that city. This Bombay force, 4500 strong, under Colonel Egerton, quitted the coast, advanced boldly through the ghauts, arrived at Condala, and by

* "The wild conduct of Colonel Leslie," said Hastings, "deprived me of every hope of effecting any useful purpose with the detachment while he had the command of it. . . . Instead of pursuing the route which had been prescribed him, he loitered away four months in Bondilcund, busied in the paltry work of accommodating the domestic contests of that government, and making treaties of alliance with the rajah and his mean attendants. These were direct infringements of his positive instructions."—*Letter to Sulivan, dated 29th November*, 1778.

† Letter to Sulivan.

the 4th of January, 1779, were in full march for Poona, with twenty-five days' provision in hand. Loose squadrons of Mahratta horse kept skirmishing and retreating before them, but Colonel Egerton could nowhere see the friendly Mahratta army which Ragoba had assured him would repair to his standard. Ragoba, who was accompanying Egerton with a very diminutive force, and who had received a considerable loan from the Bombay government, was taken to task; but he represented that the wavering Mahratta chiefs were not likely to join until the English should have obtained some decisive advantage.

Egerton, therefore, kept advancing till the 9th of January, when he was only sixteen miles from Poona, in which neighbourhood he was to meet and form a junction with Goddard. But here a halt was suddenly ordered, for a large army of Mahratta horse was seen in front. Unfortunately for the credit of the expedition, the Bombay government had sent two civil commissioners to share the authority and direct the movements of Egerton. The civilians allowed themselves to be overcome by unmanly fears, and, upon pretext that the subsistence of the troops would be very precarious if they advanced—they had still in camp provisions for eighteen days!—they ordered a retreat. The Mahratta army of horse followed them and almost enveloped them, cut to pieces three or four hundred men, and carried off the greater part of their baggage and provisions. The two commissioners fell into a state of helplessness and despair; and even Colonel Egerton declared it to be impossible to carry back the army to Bombay. The three deserved hanging, and two of them, who had been the chief cause of this precipitate and wretchedly managed retreat, were well nigh incurring the risk of a worse fate. A deputation was sent to the Mahrattas to know upon what terms they would condescend to permit their quiet march back to the coast. The Mahratta chiefs demanded that Ragoba should be delivered to them. With this demand Colonel Egerton and the commission complied, excusing this breach of honour and hospitality by alleging, what was probably true enough, that Ragoba, despairing of success, had opened a correspondence with the enemy. When the Mahratta chiefs had got Ragoba into their hands, they asked another price for permitting the retreat, and this was nothing less than a new treaty by which the English should agree to give up all the acquisitions they had made in that part of India since the year 1756, and send orders to Colonel Goddard to return peaceably to Bengal. Egerton and the commissioners did as they were commanded, and signed a treaty to this effect. The Mahratta chiefs then asked for hostages, intimating that they must be men of importance. The army recommended that the two commissioners should be delivered over to them; but it was finally arranged that two other civilians should be sent to the Mahratta camp. The dishonoured army was then told it might pursue its march to Bombay without fear of molestation. In the meanwhile Goddard had continued advancing upon Poona, in the full confidence that he should meet Egerton and his army near that city. But when he reached Boorhampoor, the ancient capital of Candeish, 980 miles from Calcutta by the route he had taken, Goddard too was brought to a halt by perplexing letters and advices. By one letter from the field commissioners, written in compliance with their treaty, he was told that he must retrace his steps; by another from the same field commissioners he was told that he must pay no attention to what they had said; but these lack-brains gave him no account or intelligible hint of what had befallen their Pombay army. In this state of doubt Goddard remained at Boorhampoor till the 5th of February, when he learned the real state of affairs. Luckily he was no Egerton and had no field commissioners with him. He resolved not to be bound by a treaty made by fools and cowards, who had no authority over him or his movements, and no right to include him in their disgrace; and he bravely determined to continue his march to the western coast, avoiding Poona, where the game for the present was lost, and making direct for Surat, where he would be in an English settlement, with the sea open to Bombay,

and ready to act as occasion, or his orders from Calcutta, might require.

But Surat was nearly 250 miles off, the disposition of the intervening country very doubtful, and a great and increasing army of the Mahratta cavalry was hanging on his rear. His decision and rapidity, the discipline and altogether admirable conduct of his native Bengal infantry, could alone save him from destruction or dishonour. But he and his army, wherever they went, were preceded by the sweet odour of a good name. In the course of their long and toilsome march, no plundering, no excesses, no insults or wrongs of any kind had been permitted. Hence the country people flocked to supply him with provisions, and to render him such information and services as they could. From Boorhampoor to the coast his route lay through the most fertile and best cultivated fields of Hindustan, thickly dotted with open villages and defenceless towns, with property in them, and commodities and luxuries most tempting to the sepoys; but nothing was touched, nothing taken without being paid for, and thus the inhabitants, instead of flying and concealing their provisions and property, as they ever had done at the approach of an army, quietly pursued their occupations, or thronged to relieve his wants by a traffic equally beneficial to both parties. Goddard and his sepoys performed the 250 miles' march in nineteen days, and entered Surat amidst acclamations. They had achieved a triumph more valuable than any victory: they had left a moral impression which could not be soon effaced, and which was scarcely overrated by Hastings. "Be assured," wrote the governor-general to one of the directors, "that the successful and steady progress of a part, and that known to be but a small part, of the military force of Bengal from the Jumna to Surat has contributed more than perhaps our more splendid achievements to augment our military reputation, and to confirm the ascendant of our influence over all the powers of Hindustan. To them, as to ourselves, the attempt appeared astonishing and impracticable, because it had never before been made or suggested. It has shown what the British are capable of effecting."* Goddard was promoted to the rank of general, and soon received the commands of the supreme council to take upon himself all future wars or negotiations with the Mahrattas. Ragoba, escaping from his confinement at Poona, took refuge in Surat.

Goddard proposed an amicable treaty with the Poona regency or confederacy, upon condition that they would annul the dishonourable treaty extorted from Egerton and the field commissioners, and give up all connexion with the French. The Mahratta chiefs replied that they would enter upon no negotiation until Ragoba was given up and Salsette restored to them. Upon this Goddard prepared for the field, which he took at the beginning of January, 1780. In a few days he reduced the fortress of Dubhoy and carried by storm the important city of Ahmedabad, the ancient capital of Guzerat. He was recalled in the direction of Surat by intelligence that a Mahratta army under the two great chiefs or princes, Scindia and Holkar, was approaching that city. On the 8th of March his rapid marches had brought him up with this army. It was 40,000 strong, but he resolved to attack it that very night. But the attack was prevented by a letter from one of the two hostages whom Egerton had left in the hands of the Mahrattas, and who now intimated that those chiefs were desirous of peace, and inclined to purchase it upon Goddard's terms. Scindia even liberated the two hostages and sent them to the English camp with a vakeel, or agent, to open negotiations. But, as Scindia wished to bargain for the person of Ragoba, who was following Goddard, and as he and Holkar were soon suspected of a design to waste the time until the setting in of the rains should interrupt the campaign, the general broke off the negotiations. By the more rapid movements of their cavalry Scindia and Holkar were for many days enabled to avoid an attack; but on the 3rd of April, between night and morning, Goddard with a small but select part of his army surprised them in their camp and gave them a thorough defeat. Flying in the greatest confusion

* Letter to Sulivan, as given by Mr. Gleig.

Sepoys. – From Hunter's Picturesque Views in India.

No. 17.

to the ghauts, the Mahrattas left Goddard undisputed master of all the country between the mountains and the sea. Having taken possession of the principal towns, Goddard put his army into cantonments.

In the mean time Hastings had formed an alliance with a Hindu prince, commonly called the Ranna of Gohud, who possessed an extensive hilly country on the Jumna, between the territories of the great Mahratta Scindia and the kingdom of Oude; and Captain Popham with a small force had been detached to assist the Ranna in expelling a Mahratta invasion. Popham had taken the field at the beginning of the year, and had not only driven out the Mahrattas from the dominions of the Ranna, but had crossed Sinde, had followed them into their own territory, and had taken by storm the fortress of Lahar, the capital of Cutchwagar. Hastings recommended the immediate reinforcing of Popham as an officer capable of shaking the power of Scindia and Holkar in the heart of their own country. Francis protested against any extension of the war, but it was resolved to send another detachment. Before it had time to arrive, Popham with extraordinary skill and daring took by escalade the fortress of Gualior, one of the very strongest and most important places in all India, built upon a lofty and almost perpendicular rock, and then defended by a numerous garrison. Scindia had made it a grand depôt for artillery and military stores. The brave young Bruce, who led the escalading and storming party, was one of a family insensible to danger—he was brother to Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller. Gualior had long been deemed impregnable by the natives: it was only about 190 miles from Delhi, and not more than 50 from Agra, which was then Scindia's capital. The Mahrattas abandoned all the neighbouring country, and carried terror and dismay into Agra.

The opposition to this brilliant campaign of Popham was about the last public act in India of Francis. A hollow reconciliation had been effected between the governor-general and this member of the supreme council, Francis agreeing to cease or moderate his opposition, and Hastings agreeing to allow Francis a larger share in the distribution of places of honour and profit. But the temper of one of these contracting parties was uncontrollable, and so were the suspicions and antipathies of the other. If Hastings on vital occasions could suspend his resentments, he was not of a forgiving temper; and Francis had offered him insults difficult to be forgiven by any man, unless on a death-bed. He attributed the far greater part of the agony of mind he had endured, and of the risks he had run, to the "incendiary impressions" of the ex-clerk of the War-office. "Francis," said he to a confidential correspondent, "is the vilest fetcher and carrier of tales to set friends, and even the most intimate friends, at variance, of any man I ever knew. Even the apparent levity of his ordinary behaviour is but a cloak to deception."* The governor-general moreover felt that he was not governor so long as Francis remained as a check upon *him*; and never was man more eager for a single and supreme authority, or what he called "an undivided form of government." Even after his compact with Francis he declared with bitterness—"I am not governor. All the powers I possess are those of preventing the rule from falling into worse hands than my own. . . . I came to this government when it subsisted on borrowed resources, and when its powers were unknown beyond the borders of the country which it held in concealed and unprofitable subjection. I saw it grow into wealth and national consequence, and again sink into a decline that must infallibly end it, if a very speedy remedy be not applied. Its present constitution is made up of discordant parts, and contains the seeds of death in it. I am morally certain that the resources of this country, in the hands of a military people and in the disposition of a consistent and undivided form of government, are both capable of vast internal improvement and of raising that power which possesses them to the dominion of all India."† Now Francis's constant theme was that this dominion of all India was a wild and dangerous dream; and, as to power in the government, he proclaimed daily and almost

* Letters to Sulivan. † Id.

hourly that Hastings had already a great deal too much. Under all these circumstances it was utterly impossible that the compact should be binding, or that the truce between the governor-general and his opponent should be lasting. The agreement had been entered upon in 1779, when Hastings received his re-appointment as governor-general, but only for a single year; and when Mr. Barwell, his steady supporter, was impatient to return to England to enjoy the fortune he had made. Barwell, however, had consented to remain, to vote for his friend, if Francis could not be induced to forego his opposition to the extension of the Mahratta war in the direction of the Jumna and Agra, or would not consent to its being conducted according to the plans of the governor-general, who willingly took the whole responsibility upon himself. Francis had agreed to be neutral on these points, and thereupon, or in consequence of this agreement, Barwell had taken his departure for England. Incensed at the renewal of opposition and the pains taken to thwart the campaign of Popham, Hastings, on the 14th of July (1780), in answering a minute of council, declared,—"I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour." Upon this, Francis could not do less than challenge the governor-general; and, not being veiled and defended by the impenetrable cloud and mist that hung over Junius, he was shot through the body.* The wound, though dangerous, did not prove mortal; but he resigned his place and returned home a few months after receiving it. The resort to the pistol was in these times common in India, where men's tempers seemed to become as fiery and as peppery as the favourite dish at their tables. This was the second duel in which Hastings himself had been engaged.

When Francis challenged Hastings and raised his pistol against him, he was planning and hoping to be his successor as governor-general of India. This dream of ambition scarcely forsook him during the whole remainder of his life, and even in his old age he intrigued and sighed for that more than vice-regal office. His hopes at first might be encouraged by the suddenness of his promotion from an humble and poorly paid place in the War-office to be a counsellor in India with the splendid salary of 10,000*l.* a-year. Convinced, as we are, that Francis was the author of 'Junius,' we believe that this sudden and excessive promotion was granted by the administration of Lord North, in order to stop his sharp, venomous pen. From the time Francis got the Indian appointment 'Junius' ceased to write. One who had already obtained so much by the pen might naturally count upon obtaining more by the same means, by the exercise of a talent which was almost demoniac, and by the active employment of a practised turn for intrigue, and of the eloquence and abilities he indisputably possessed in a rare degree.

* "Judging it unbecoming," says Hastings, "to surprise him with a minute at the council-table, or send it first to the secretary, I enclosed it in a note to him that evening. The next day, after council, he desired me to withdraw with him into a private apartment of the council-house, where, taking out of his pocket a paper, he read from it a challenge in terms I accepted it, the time and place of meeting were fixed before we parted, and on the morning of the Thursday following, being the 17th, between the hours of five and six, we met. We exchanged shots at nearly the same instant; mine entered his side just below the right shoulder, and lodged in the opposite side under the left. He fell, and was conveyed to a house in the neighbourhood."—*Letter to Sullivan, dated 30th of August, as given by Mr. Gleig* This letter contains Hastings's own account of the whole transaction, which certainly makes the conduct of Francis appear in very dark and dirty colours. As, however, the agreement between him and Francis was a verbal one—neither party could have ventured to put down such a bargain in writing—there is a want of documentary evidence to establish the charges of broken faith, &c. Hastings, indeed, produced a paper containing the following words: "Mr. Francis will not oppose any measures which the governor-general shall recommend for the prosecution of the war in which we are supposed to be engaged with the Mahrattas, or for the general support of the present political system of his government." But the paper was not signed, and Francis declared that, though the paper had been shown to him, he had never agreed to it, or bound himself by its contents. It thus became a question of personal honour and veracity, for Hastings could not disclose the whole of the bargain, or call upon Mr. Barwell, who had been a party in it, to do so.

## CHAPTER XVII.

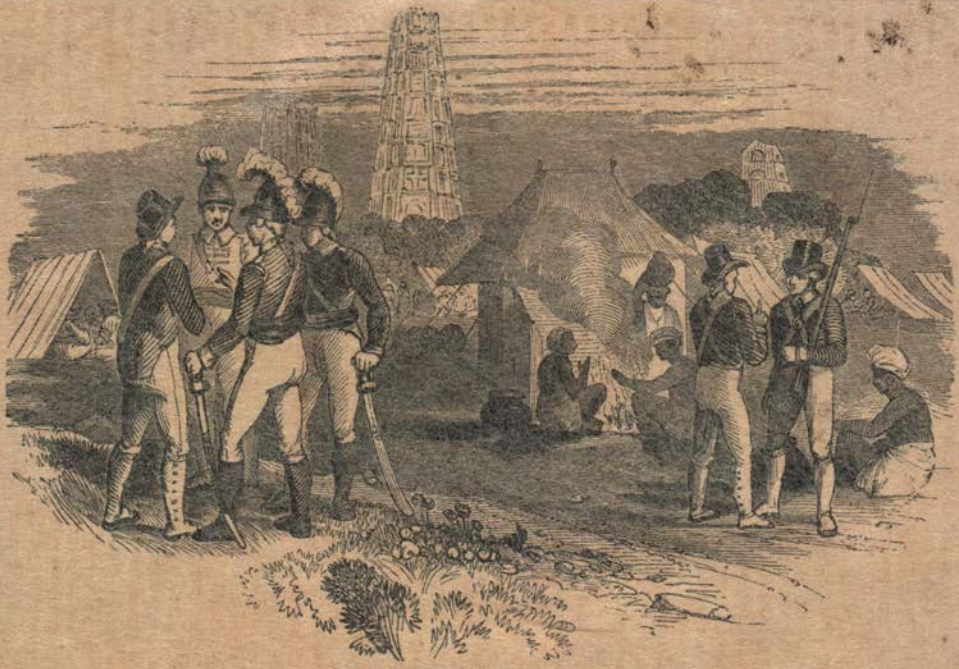
BETWEEN Goddard and Popham the most brilliant successes had been obtained, and the Mahratta war promised a complete triumph, when the Mysoreans again took the field, threatening ruin to the English power and possessions on the Coromandel coast.

For the space of seven years Hyder Ali had been concerting schemes with the French at Pondicherry, improving and increasing his army, and preparing the nerves of war by a financial system which has been much applauded, but which appears to have consisted mainly in extortion from his subjects and plunder from his neighbours. Hyder could neither read nor write; but he had a sort of mental arithmetic which is described as being wonderfully rapid and correct; and he was assisted by learned Brahmins, said to be great financiers, or at least great accountants. He had adopted the common Indian practice of squeezing his treasurers, finance ministers, and collectors; and when they escaped him by death, he got at their money by torturing their family and servants. These utter horrors were as common almost in every part of the East, from Pekin to Constantinople, as was the practice of secreting treasure—a practice which gave rise to them, and which had not been unknown in Europe, and even in England, in the middle ages, when men buried in earth what they could not secure in trade or in banks, and the possession of which they could not own without danger. One of his Brahmin dewans sent a dying declaration that the full amount of his fortune was 50,000 pagodas, and honestly come by; and he implored as a favour that his master would receive the money into the treasury, and leave his family in peace when he should be gone. Hyder not only took the money, but made a merit of excusing the bereft family from the usual process of torture; which, he doubted not, would have led to the discovery of concealed hoards. His next dewan, also a Brahmin, was tortured until he disgorged all he had, and was then dismissed, a cripple and a beggar. The successor to this victim was a Mussulman, the first of that religion he ever employed in the finance department: he was esteemed an able and an honourable man; but after a while he too was seized, and he died under torture inflicted to extort money which he did not possess. The next dewan, on being dismissed from office, declared that he was neither poorer nor richer than when he first ventured or was forced into the employment; that all the money he possessed amounted to 10,000 rupees, the exact sum he had when he became dewan. Nevertheless he was thrown into prison, where he died: the 10,000 rupees which he had mentioned—and no more—were found in his house, and Hyder took them from his family, who were left to starve or beg.* We presume that the English and French writers who have so highly applauded Hyder's financial system would not have chosen to be his ministers of finance. The treasury of Mysore was certainly well filled, and all the weight which money could give was on the side of Hyder, when, in the summer of 1780,

* Colonel Wilks, Historical Sketches of the South of India.—The honest missionary Schwartz, who lived some time in Mysore, and who was admitted to his presence, said of Hyder, "He is served through fear: two hundred people with whips in their hands stand always ready for duty; not a day passes on which numbers are not flogged. Hyder applies the same cat to all transgressors alike—gentlemen and horsekeepers, tax gatherers and his own sons. It will hardly be believed what punishments are daily inflicted on the collectors. One of them was tied up, and two men came with their whips and cut him dreadfully: with sharp nails they tore his flesh asunder, and then scourged him afresh; his shrieks rent the air."

after prayers in all the mosques, and ceremonies in all the Hindu temples, he quitted Seringapatam and poured through the ghauts with 15,000 drilled infantry, 40,000 peons, 28,000 cavalry, 2000 artillery and rocket-men, and 400 Europeans, Frenchmen and other adventurers. There was a complete staff of French officers to direct operations according to the best rules. The artillery exceeded one hundred pieces of all calibres. To meet these long preparations and this immense force, the presidency of Madras had an empty exchequer, a divided and factious council, an army not exceeding 6000 men, counting sepoys, who formed by far the largest part of it; and these troops, wholly unprepared, were scattered over a wide tract of country, in Pondicherry, which had been taken from the French, in Trichinopoly, in Arcot, in Madras, in cantonments far apart, and in forts incapable of resisting a battering-train, or badly supplied with provisions and stores. As for the forces of their ally, the Nabob of the Carnatic, there was no reliance to be put in them: they ran away, or they deserted to Hyder, as soon as his army defiled through the ghauts. It was difficult to collect the detachments; and they were hardly anywhere strong enough or quick enough to check the rapid advance of the Mysorean. Porto Novo, on the coast, and Conjeveram, close to Trichinopoly, were captured and plundered; the people were flying in all directions from fire and sword towards the English presidency; and the flames kindled by Hyder were seen by night from the top of Mount St. Thomas. Blacks and whites gathered under the guns of Fort St. George as the only place where they could be safe, and the neighbouring villas, the Black town, and Madras itself, were deserted by their panic-stricken inhabitants. Almost the first thing the presidency did was to dispatch a fast-sailing ship to Calcutta, with letters and agents, to implore the governor-general to send them help, but above all *money*: and Hastings and the supreme council were told that if they sent money all would go well, but that without money everything must be lost, and a deathblow be given to the British empire in India. We shall presently see how Hastings answered to this appeal, and the terrible means he adopted to procure and continue the enormous supplies that were really required to save India.

To complete the embarrassments of the presidency of Madras, the arrival of a French armament on the coast, to recover Pondicherry and co-operate with Hyder, was confidently reported. The presidency issued contradictory orders to the officers commanding the detached parts of their army, and there appears to have been no concert or good understanding among the chief commanders of their forces. One place of rendezvous was named, and then another; and the two main divisions, which might have repulsed the invaders if united, never formed a junction, and were beaten separately one after the other. Colonel Baillie, with a lamentable deficiency of judgment, allowed himself to be surrounded, near Conjeveram, by the whole host of Hyder, with upwards of sixty cannon. But the bravery of his small body of men was even more conspicuous than his own folly. Though worn out by forced marches, and almost sinking with hunger, sepoys, as well as British, kept their ground with a spirit that has rarely been surpassed. But for the French staff around him, Hyder would have given up the contest and retreated. The English repelled charge after charge, and the fire of their platoons, as regular as the motions of a machine, inflicted terrible slaughter. But, at half-past seven in the evening, when the battle had lasted for many hours, and when Hyder's troops appeared to be commencing a retreat without orders, two tumbrils blew up, killed a number of men, overset their guns, and left the English almost without ammunition. Still they kept their ground, and they continued fighting on till nine o'clock, when all the sepoys that remained were broken and cut to pieces. The British that survived—less than 400 in number, and most of them wounded—gained the ridge of a hill and formed in square, the officers fighting with their swords, the men with their bayonets, or only now and then burning a cartridge. They resisted many attacks, and would have resisted more if Colonel Baillie had not gone forward to



Encampment at Conjeveram.

No. 20.

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ask for quarter, waving his handkerchief and ordering them to lay down their arms. It is said that Baillie committed a mistake in supposing that his signal was favourably answered; it is said that some of his men would not lay down their arms, and continued to use them; but the undisputed termination of the affair was a cowardly butchery of one half of the English and a horrible captivity to the rest. Of eighty-six officers thirty-six were killed and thirty-four wounded and mangled. The young soldiers of Hyder and his son Tippoo amused themselves with fleshing their swords and exhibiting their skill on men already helpless and dying, on the sick and wounded, and even on women and children. The prisoners that were taken and allowed to live were stripped of their clothing to the last remnant, and none escaped this brutal treatment except a few who were saved by the humane interposition of French officers.*

Sir Hector Munro, who commanded the other main division of the Madras army, was within a short march of Hyder's rear, delayed by want of rice and other necessaries. Upon learning the dreadful catastrophe he abandoned his tents and baggage, threw his heavier guns into a tank, and fled, rather than retreated, to Chingleput, and thence to Mount St. Thomas and Madras, being followed the whole way by clouds of Mysorean horse. A great part of the country was again laid waste, and, within a few weeks from Hyder Ali's first descent, Wandewash, Chingleput, Vellore, and Arcot were either captured or closely besieged. But for Hastings there was an end to our power, not only in the Carnatic, but also in the Northern Circars. He too had to contend with an empty treasury and with a council that was still far from unanimous. Money, however, was procured, and fifteen lacs of rupees were sent off to Madras as a present supply for the army; more money was promised, and the governor-general's missives and agents were sent flying through the country to procure it—at Moorshedabad, at Patna, at Benares, at Lucknow, in every place where Hastings had a claim or could invent one—for all considerations gave way in his mind to the paramount duty of preserving the British empire in the East. If he could have coined his body, and his soul too, into lacs of rupees, he would have done it at this tremendous crisis. The inept governor of Fort St. George, or Madras, was recalled, and Sir Eyre Coote, who had fought under Clive at Plassey, who had defeated Lally and Bussy at Wandewash, and who had taken Pondicherry in the last war, was invited to take the command of Fort St. George, and the entire management of the war with Hyder Ali. Peace was concluded with Scindia, Popham was recalled from the Jumna, and amicable arrangements were adjusted with the other Mahratta powers, under the guarantee of the Rajah of Berar.

Sir Eyre Coote, who had only recently returned to India as commander-in-chief of Bengal and a member of the supreme council, had not always agreed with Hastings at the council-table; but, in the moment of danger, he gave him his entire support, recognised the spirited wisdom and decision of his plans, and, though infirm and suffering, undertook the command. Some faint murmurs of opposition or disapprobation were heard from Francis, who had not yet taken his departure; but the imminence of the peril, and the conviction of the necessity of agreement and of energetic measures, would not permit men to listen to him; and Hastings, at every demur or hesitation of the council, offered, in the manner of Clive, to take all the responsibility upon himself. Not a moment was to be lost; for if the French armament should arrive before Coote, then all would be lost. Five hundred choice British troops were embarked at Calcutta, and with these, and six hundred lascars and between forty and fifty gentlemen volunteers, the Indian veteran sailed for Madras on the 23rd of October. On the night after his departure there arose a terrible storm, which continued all the next day. Some alarmists whispered that the veteran and his little army had gone to the bottom of the Bay of Bengal; but the squadron weathered the storm, and after a

* Colonel Wilks, Sketches of the South of India; and Memoirs of the late War in Asia.

very quick passage got safe to Madras. Foreseeing that further reinforcements would be required in the Carnatic, and knowing, since Goddard's progress to Surat, that the native troops might be trusted on the longest marches, Hastings resolved that another detachment should be got ready and sent to Madras, not by sea, but by land; he strained every nerve, he looked out for the best officers and the best men, and early in the ensuing year (1781) Colonel Pearse, a counterpart of Goddard, started from Calcutta with five small regiments of native infantry, some native cavalry, and a proportionate train of artillery, to find or force his way through Cuttack, the Northern Circars, and half of the Carnatic, a distance of more than 1100 miles, and through a country intersected by many rivers, which were all to be crossed where broadest, or nearest their mouths. Pearse and his detachment overcame all obstacles, performed the journey, got to Madras at a most critical juncture, and were eminently useful in that quarter.

In the mean time Coote had commenced operations with 1700 Europeans and about 5000 native troops, by marching to recover Wandewash, the scene of his greatest exploit. Hyder Ali, terrified at his name, abandoned Wandewash with the utmost precipitation, raised several of his sieges, and seemed more than once inclined to fly altogether, or to treat with Coote. But at this juncture the arrival of a French fleet obliged the English to change their line of march; and after a few days Coote encamped on the hills behind Pondicherry, in the roadstead of which there rode at anchor seven French ships of the line and four frigates. On taking Pondicherry, Sir Hector Munro had contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and putting a very *small* garrison into it, which had been withdrawn at the beginning of Hyder's present invasion. The French officers had given their parole, the inhabitants had been allowed to continue their trade; but the temptation was too great, and when it was seen that the English were flying in all directions, and known that an armament was coming from France, they clapped the English resident into prison, flew to arms, enlisted sepoys, and collected provisions for an army at Karangotty, at a convenient distance from Porto Novo. Coote disarmed the inhabitants of Pondicherry and then marched away to destroy the depôt. Hyder, emboldened by the arrival of the French ships, had descended to the coast; and he now moved on the right flank of the English, rapidly and with the evident intention of protecting the depôt, and keeping open his communications with the fleet. At one time the two armies were very close to each other; and Coote, with the spirit and nimbleness of former years, mounted his horse and rode along the English lines, telling his men that the day was come for beating Hyder. But the Mysorean would not accept the challenge to battle; and in a very few days he moved rapidly back into the interior, despondent and terror-stricken at the departure of the French ships, which, with the old apprehension of the approach of a superior English squadron, set sail for the Isle of France on the 15th of February, 1781. Coote could not follow Hyder, for a sickness broke out in his camp, and the country had been so wasted that he could not find forage for his cattle.

Penetrating into Tanjore, Hyder continued his ravages in that beautiful and productive district; and his son Tippoo returned to Wandewash, and even laid siege to that town. Sir Edward Hughes with an English squadron destroyed Hyder's infant navy in his own ports of Calicut and Mangalore, and about the middle of June arrived at Madras with some reinforcements from Bombay. On the 18th of June Coote attacked the fortified pagoda of Chillambram, but was repulsed with considerable loss. In a military sense, however, the loss was a gain, for the affair of Chillambram gave Hyder such confidence that he came again down to the coast and encamped at Cuddalore with the determination to risk a battle rather than permit Coote's advance to Trichinopoly and Tanjore. Hyder took up good ground and raised formidable redoubts according to the plans drawn for him by French officers; yet, nevertheless, he was completely defeated by the English, who advanced from Porto Novo and attacked him in his lines

The Royal Palace at Arcot.

No. 21.

on the 1st of July. The old Mysorean, seated on a portable stool upon a hill in the rear of his army, was thrown into a fit of madness by Coote's most unexpected success; he raved and tore his clothes, refusing to move from the spot, till an old servant pulled his slippers on his legs, and put him on a fleet horse. Coote had no cavalry to pursue him. He ordered his son Tippoo to raise the siege of Wandewash, and he retired himself to Arcot quite crest-fallen. He began to have a correcter notion of the spirit and resources of his enemy. "The defeat of many Baillies," said he, "will not destroy these English. I can ruin their resources by land, but I cannot dry up the sea." He bitterly regretted having allowed himself to be drawn into the war by French counsels; he still more bitterly complained of having been amused by idle expectations of a great French force from Europe. He, however, recovered heart enough to risk another battle for the defence of Arcot. The ground he chose was the very spot where Baillie's detachment had been annihilated, and which he therefore considered a lucky spot. He was again defeated; but this time, owing to some squabbles and jealousies among the superior English officers, Coote's army suffered much more than in the preceding affair. This was on the 27th of August. On the 27th of September another battle was fought in the pass of Sholinghur, near Bellore. Here Hyder was routed with terrible loss, and the fortress of Bellore, one of the keys of the Carnatic, almost reduced to extremities by famine, was relieved and saved. The rains, the monsoon floods, and the rising of the rivers, put an end to further extensive operations; but before Coote retired into cantonments, Chittore, Palipett, and other places were retaken.

In the mean time an able and a truly excellent man had arrived from England as governor of Madras. This was Lord Macartney, who landed at Fort St. George on the 22nd of June of this present year (1781). His lordship brought intelligence of the declaration of war between England and Holland: and his first care was to make himself master of all the Dutch factories or settlements on that coast. Sadras surrendered upon summons; Poulicat, having a regular Dutch garrison and a corps of Hyder's army quartered in its vicinity, offered resistance; Fort St. George had not a soldier to spare, it had been drained of men and almost of stores to supply Sir Eyre Coote; but Lord Macartney put himself at the head of some gentlemen volunteers and Madras militia, and on the approach of this force Poulicat surrendered. These operations were only a prelude to the siege and capture of Negapatam, the chief of all the Dutch settlements, and which, being situated on one of the mouths of the Cavery river, and close to the frontier of Tanjore, was of immense importance both in a commercial and a military point of view. Hyder, in scouring Tanjore, had drawn assistance and supplies through this port. His lordship had still no troops to dispose of; but Admiral Hughes had good marines and good sailors ready for anything; and on the 21st of October the seamen and marines were landed in the neighbourhood of Negapatam to co-operate with a small detachment under Colonel Brathwaite, who had maintained himself in the Tanjore country, and who now crossed the Cavery. With admirable rapidity ground was broke and a battery raised of ten 18-pounders, and by the 12th of November Negapatam, with all that it contained, was ours. Among its contents were six thousand five hundred and odd men—a number far exceeding that of the besiegers, counting marines, seamen, and all—a vast quantity of arms and warlike stores, and a double investment of goods for Europe, no ships having arrived from Holland in the preceding year, in consequence of the alarm created in the Dutch East India Company by Commodore Fielding's attack on the squadron of Count Beyland.*

* Though in a state of peace with Great Britain, the Dutch had long persisted in carrying articles contraband of war to the ports of France and to the ports of the revolted British colonies in America; and the Dutch government had protested against our right of search, and had turned a deaf ear to all the remonstrances of the British cabinet against this serious infraction of the law of nations. At last the matter came to a hostile issue. Our government sent out Commodore Fielding with a good squadron to intercept a

Nothing more remained in that quarter to take from them; but on the other side of Palk's Strait, not many leagues from the Coromandel coast, was the island of Ceylon, all access to which the Dutch had most jealously guarded for more than a hundred years, and there they possessed the famed town and port of Trincomalee, one of the most important in all India, the most secure place of refuge for ships surprised by storms or overtaken by the violent monsoon, and so conveniently situated with reference to the English settlements on the Coromandel coast, that a vessel may reach it from Madras in two days. It was a depôt too of "the sweet cane," or cinnamon, and of pearls of great price. Macartney resolved to add it to the list of conquests. Admiral Hughes, taking on board only five hundred land troops, sailed from Negapatam on the 2nd of January (1782), and by the 11th of the same month the English flag was planted in Trincomalee, the Dutch making a most feeble resistance.* Colonel Brathwaite, after assisting in the reduction of Negapatam, returned into Tanjore with the view of recovering some of the fortresses of that country which had been taken by Hyder and his son Tippoo, rather through bribery than force. By the same arts Brathwaite was deceived and misled by the Tanjoreans: and while encamped on the left bank of the Cavery he was surprised, enveloped, and destroyed, on the 18th of February, by Tippoo and a French corps, after maintaining a most unequal struggle from sunrise to sunset. The circumstances of Brathwaite's defeat resembled those of Colonel Baillie's: he had only 100 English, 1500 sepoys, and 300 cavalry; while Tippoo had 10,000 horse, 10,000 infantry, 20 pieces of cannon, and 400 Europeans commanded by French officers. The French decided the long and obstinate contest by charging the exhausted sepoys with the bayonet. The massacre of the prisoners was prevented by the feeling and spirit of the French officers, who were seen risking their own lives and cutting down Tippoo's savages to prevent it. This severe blow was almost immediately followed by the arrival on the coast of M. de Suffrein with ships and an army 3000 strong, two-thirds being veteran French troops and the other third Caffres picked up at the Isles of France and Bourbon. Hyder and Tippoo were in a rapture of joy; yet the wily old Mysorean, upon reflection, was alarmed at the greatness of the force of his allies, and made up his mind never to admit them in force into Mysore. Admiral Suffrein had had an adventurous voyage. Among the Cape de Verd Islands he had encountered the squadron of Commodore Johnstone, who, after an indecisive battle, had followed him as far as the Cape of Good Hope, and who probably might have spoiled his voyage if he had not preferred capturing five rich Dutch East Indiamen in Saldanha Bay. Johnstone returned home with his prizes; but a part of his squadron, with the transports and Indiamen having on board troops for India, followed in the track of Admiral Suffrein. The French put into the Isle of France, where they were joined by several other ships, some of the line, some frigates. The English, whose crews were very sickly, stopped at the island of Johanna for twenty or four and twenty days, when they continued their course for the western coast of India, hoping to form a junction with Sir Edward Hughes,

Dutch fleet of merchantmen (said to be bound for the Mediterranean, but, in reality, chiefly destined for French ports with stores, &c.) under the convoy of Count Beyland. On the 1st of January, 1780, Fielding came up with these Dutchmen a little to the westward of the Isle of Wight, and desired that he might be allowed to examine the merchant vessels. The Dutch admiral refused, and fired on the boats which were sent off to search the vessels. The English commodore then fired a shot a-head of the count's ship, and the Dutchman replied by a whole broadside. Fielding then fired a broadside himself, upon which Beyland, who, besides the merchantmen, had only two ships of the line and two frigates, struck his colours. The English seized seven of the trading vessels, which were principally laden with warlike or naval stores; but the rest escaped in the darkness of the night, and got safely into Brest. Count Beyland was given to understand that he might hoist his colours and proceed on his voyage. He hoisted his flag and saluted the British flag; but he declared he could not proceed unless the seven merchant vessels were restored to him; and he sailed into Spithead, and came to anchor close to Fielding's squadron.—*Pictorial History of England.*

* Sir John Barrow, Account of the Public Life of the Earl of Macartney.

land the troops, and then with united force destroy Suffrein's fleet. But the English were becalmed for several weeks; and when within 260 leagues of Bombay they were caught by the changing monsoon and carried to the coast of Arabia Felix. At the beginning of December the winds allowed them to resume their voyage; and, under the impression that the French armament was destined for that neighbourhood in order to co-operate with the Mahrattas, in conformity with engagements made by M. Lubin at Poona, part of the fleet ran for Bombay, and part continued in quest of Admiral Hughes, who had left the western for the Coromandel coast several months before, and who was at this time at Negapatam or at Trincomalee.

The first of these divisions reached Bombay on the 22nd of January: it had part of the troops on board, under the command of Colonel Humberston Mackenzie. This officer, on learning that all was quiet in that neighbourhood, and that the real scene of the war was on the opposite coast, sailed almost immediately for Madras; but, in consequence of fresh intelligence reporting that Hyder was triumphant in the Carnatic, that Madras was in danger, and that the French fleet was assembling in great force on the Coromandel coast, by which he must pass, Colonel Mackenzie, after consulting a council of war, resolved to attempt a diversion on the Malabar side of Hyder's dominions, and on the 18th of February landed his troops at Calicut. Mackenzie had scarcely 1000 men; but there was already an English detachment on that part of the coast, and when the forces were united the colonel was strong enough to drive before him a Mysorean army, to take several towns and fortresses, and to create great alarm in the mind of Hyder, who was forced to weaken his army in the Carnatic in order to check Mackenzie.

Suffrein did not leave the Isle of France until some time after the English squadron had left Johanna; but his voyage was more fortunate than theirs, and he reached the Coromandel coast early in January, having captured on his way the 'Hannibal,' a fifty-gun ship, which had been separated from the rest of the English squadron.* His approach was made known at Madras by the arrival of some country ships flying from his pursuit. Several of these vessels, loaded with grain for the supply of the half-famishing army of Sir Eyre Coote, were taken by the French. Sir Edward Hughes, leaving a small garrison in Trincomalee, returned to Madras, and was fortunate enough to arrive there on the 8th of February, without encountering the very superior force of Suffrein, although he had passed very near it. With equal good fortune the part of the squadron from England which had separated from the rest on the western coast ran past the French and joined Hughes at Madras on the 9th.† Sir Edward now counted nine sail of the line; but six of these ships were foul and damaged from long service. On the 15th Suffrein appeared in the offing, and sent in his lighter vessels to reconnoitre the English force. The report was vexatious and disappointing, as he had counted upon fighting Hughes with his six ships of the line only; and although he had himself twelve ships of the line and six frigates, he was not over anxious to engage. He was as brave a man as ever fought under the white flag or any other national standard; but the positive orders of his government were, to act with extreme caution, as their finances could not bear the equipping of another fleet for this distant service, and if he lost his ships there would again be an end to the hopes of the French in India.

The English admiral, fully expecting an attack, placed his ships, with springs on their cables, in the best position to defend themselves and the numerous transports and trading shipping which lay in the road. Instead of coming in, Suffrein stood away to the southward. Hughes, having taken on board some provisions, and some sound men to supply the places

* The 'Hannibal,' on the clearing up of a thick fog, found herself in the very midst of Suffrein's fleet; but she was not taken without a desperate combat.

† *This division of the squadron consisted only* of three ships of the line and some transports, and it must have been sacrificed if it had fallen in with Suffrein.. The loss would have been almost fatal, for the ships contained about 1000 or 1200 English soldiers.

of his numerous sick, weighed and followed the French. On the 16th the English ships that were clean and *coppered* came up with and captured six sail of Suffrein's convoy, one of these sail being a large French transport loaded with shot, powder, and guns, and having on board many officers and 300 men, the other five being English transports which had been captured a few days before by the French. Suffrein, as Hughes had anticipated, bore round to protect his convoy. The two fleets came close together during the night, and on the following day, the 17th, they came into action. Suffrein had the double advantage of the weather-gage and concentration of force, for some of Hughes's ships had fallen away to leeward—the original superiority of force remaining the same, *i. e.* twelve ships of the line, without counting the frigates, against nine. The brunt of the action on the English side, indeed, was borne by only five ships; and two of these, the 'Superb' and 'Exeter,' suffered severely, though, after the old fashion, more in their masts and rigging than in their crews. When the 'Exeter' was a wreck, and when two French ships were bearing down to attack her in that condition, Commodore King asked his sailing master what he should do with the ship. "There is nothing to be done but to fight her till she sinks," was the master's reply. But a sudden squall brought up the ships that were to leeward, and gave the British the advantage of the wind; and in twenty-five minutes more Suffrein suspended the conflict, and bore away for Porto Novo. Hughes made for Trincomalee, as the most convenient place for repairing his ships. His killed and wounded amounted to about 130. The captain of the 'Exeter' and the captain of the 'Superb' were among the slain. Suffrein's loss in men was more considerable; but his ships, or at least his masts and spars, were less damaged.*

The 2000 French and the 1000 Caffres landed at Porto Novo were under the command of M. Bussy, who, no more than Coote, was the man he had been twenty years before. They united with the army of Tippoo; but they performed no exploit till the beginning of April, when they besieged and captured Cuddalore, a convenient station for their fleet. A few days before this capture Suffrein quitted his anchorage at Porto Novo in quest of a fleet of English Indiamen which had arrived upon the Coromandel coast under the escort of two line-of-battle ships having on board a king's regiment. Hughes, who had completed his repairs and returned to Madras, instantly slipped after him to protect the Indiamen. The English admiral met this merchant fleet and saw it safely into the roadstead of Madras, and then taking the two escorting ships of the line with him, he hastened to throw some provisions and reinforcements into his recent conquest, Trincomalee. On the 8th of April, Hughes found himself almost within gun-shot of Suffrein's fleet; but he pursued his course for Ceylon to execute his more immediate object, and was closely followed by the French. He made the coast on the 11th, about fifteen leagues to windward of Trincomalee, for which place he bore away during the night. On the morning of the 12th, when the English ships were close upon a dangerous lee-shore, the French, having the weather-gage and crowding all sail, came down upon them and brought them to action under almost every possible disadvantage. The combat began at noon, became general at three o'clock, and lasted till dark; but after all it was a drawn battle, in which both sides suffered very severely, and neither could boast of the advantage, although there remained to the English sailors the honour of having overcome by their skill and steadiness the natural terrors of the situation they were in when first engaged. The number of killed and wounded was about equal, being stated on either side at from 500 to 600 men. For six or seven days the hostile fleets lay close to each other repairing their damages, which rendered them incapable of renewing the conflict. After some manœuvres which seemed to announce his intention to attack, Suffrein ran along the Ceylon coast to Battacolo, or Baticalo—another Dutch

* Captain Schomberg's Naval Chronology.—Ann. Regist.

settlement—and Hughes ran into Trincomalee.*

From Cuddalore, Bussy and Tippoo advanced against Wandewash; but Coote, though suffering from a recent and violent apoplectic attack, advanced rapidly to the relief of that place, and on the 24th of April encamped on the very spot where he had defeated Lally and Bussy in the year 1760. Instead of accepting the battle he offered, Bussy and Tippoo retreated before Coote and his prestige. The English then threatened the strong fort of Arnee, where Hyder had deposited plunder and provisions. The old Mysorean advanced in person for the defence of this place, and fought a loose, irregular battle, in which he sustained some loss; but, while he was thus facing Coote, his son Tippoo succeeded in carrying off the plunder and provisions from Arnee. After these operations Bussy retreated towards Cuddalore and Pondicherry. Hyder put himself in quarters near the coast, and Tippoo and some strong French detachments hurried away to Calicut, where the affairs of his father seemed going to utter ruin, for the Nairs or Hindu chiefs of the Malabar coast, who had been cruelly oppressed by the Mysoreans, were rising in arms, and joining the English force under Colonel Mackenzie. At this juncture, when experience had shown him that even with the aid of his European allies he could not maintain his ground in the Carnatic, or face the English, Hyder was thrown into dismay by learning the result of Hastings's successful policy, or the conclusion of the treaty between the English and the Mahrattas. He expected every moment to have the Mahratta confederacy upon him; and the Mahrattas alone had on a former occasion proved more than a match for him. "I must go alone," said the perplexed and suspicious old tyrant, "against these faithless Mahrattas, who will be falling on Mysore, for I dare not admit the French in force to my own country." His health, which had been declining for some time, was shaken by his anxieties and still increasing suspicions. He had long been haunted by visions of conspiracy and murder. Once, when asked by his familiar companion, Gholaum Ali, what made him start so much in his sleep, he replied, "My friend, the state of beggars is more delightful than my envied monarchy, for they see no conspirators when awake, and dream of no assassins when asleep." He, however, permitted himself to be persuaded by Bussy that the war in the Carnatic was far from hopeless, that means might be found to counteract Hastings's negotiations and win back the Mahrattas, not merely to a neutrality, but to a close alliance; and, while the cunning old man amused Sir Eyre Coote and kept him inactive, by the intimation that he might accede to the governor-general's treaty with the Mahrattas and become a party to it, he was preparing to co-operate with Bussy in an attack upon Negapatam.

The operations of the French and English fleets, on which the success of the powers contending on shore mainly depended, were of a curious and a complicated kind. Having refitted in Ceylon as best they could, Suffrein and Hughes returned to the coast, and on the 3rd of July fought another drawn battle, but one in which the French suffered by far the greater loss, and were only saved from a total defeat by one of those sudden shiftings of the wind which make sea-battles with sailing-ships so much a matter of chance. Suffrein, however, who was as skilful as he was brave, had the merit of availing himself of his chance with admirable seamanship and dexterity. After the battle the French went to anchor at Cuddalore, and the English to Madras. Suffrein was the first to be ready for sea, and, making again for Ceylon, and being joined on that coast by two more ships of the line, fresh from Europe, and with a strong body of troops on board, he dashed into Trincomalee Bay and summoned the forts and town. There had not been time to put these forts even in decent order, and the garrison, originally weak, was reduced by the sickliness and swampiness of the situation; but, well knowing that his antagonist, Hughes, would not be long behind him, he offered the most honourable terms in order to procure a capitula-

* Captain Schomberg's Naval Chronology.—Ann. Reg.

tion before the English fleet should arrive. The garrison surrendered on the 31st of August, and on the 2nd of September Hughes arrived. Preferring fighting with sea-room to being attacked in the bay, Suffrein came out, and another battle, far more desperate than either of the preceding ones between him and Hughes, took place, the French having sixteen sail of the line, and the English twelve.* For three or four hours the centres of the two lines were hotly engaged, ship to ship, the rival admirals, in the 'Superb' and 'L'Héros,' fighting with the greatest fury. At half-past five in the afternoon there was a short hush; but Hughes, wearing round with all his ships, and with wonderful order and rapidity, renewed the attack with advantage and with double vigour. Suffrein's mainmast was shot away by the board, and his mizenmast soon followed it. At seven o'clock the French, with a slackened fire and in some confusion, hauled their wind and became exposed to a most galling fire from the ships in the English rear. As night set in the whole of the French fleet ran back to Trincomalee, and in such hurry and confusion that one of their best ships ran ashore and was lost, and two others missed the broad mouth of the bay and fell down the coast. The English were in no condition to pursue: they had lost in the action 51 in killed and 283 in wounded, and the rigging of most of their ships was ruined. Among the slain were Captain Watt, of the 'Sultan,' Captain Wood, of the 'Worcester,' and the Hon. Captain Lumley, of the 'Isis.' It appears that Suffrein's captains had been more careful of their lives; and he was so much dissatisfied with the conduct of some of them in the action that he immediately broke six of them and sent them prisoners to the Isle of France. He concealed as much as he could the loss he had sustained, but it soon became known that the slaughter had been great beyond precedent; that in his own ship, which was crowded with men, about 140 were killed and 240 wounded, and that his entire loss in killed and wounded exceeded 1000.

Admiral Hughes returned to Madras, where he found Sir Eyre Coote determined to make an attack upon the French lines at Cuddalore, though almost deprived of the use of his limbs by another attack of paralysis. Coote required the admiral to remain to co-operate with him, and he was the more eager upon this point, as he now learned the concerted attack of Hyder and the French on Negapatam: but Hughes, who had considered himself ill used both by the general and by Lord Macartney, or the council of Madras, represented that he could not stay with any safety to his ships during the monsoon, and insisted upon going round to Bombay, where he could properly refit his shattered fleet. It is said that shelter might have been found for him nearer at hand on the Coromandel coast; but it is not so clear that Hughes could have found there the accommodations, materials, and workmen he wanted, though Suffrein had contrived to do wonders in this way at Cuddalore, improvising an arsenal or ship-yard, and, to encourage others, working himself in his shirt-sleeves like a common shipwright. It is possible that, but for his ill-humour, Hughes would have remained; but, if he had remained a day longer than he did in Madras-roads, he would, in all human probability, have been a sacrifice, and the entire loss of his fleet would have been added to other tremendous calamities. He sailed on the 15th of October, and was well out at sea before night. In the course of that night the well-known roar of the coming monsoon was heard by anxious ears in Fort St. George and the town of Madras, and the surf began to shake the coast; and by the next morning the strand was seen covered with wrecks or fragments of merchant-ships that had stayed behind when Hughes took his departure. The sight was every way dreadful, for some of these ships were loaded with rice for the garrison, the town, and the army; and every bag of rice was lost when there seemed no possibility of procuring another supply by sea or by land. There had been a scarcity before, but now there was absolute fa-

* We count 50-gun ships as ships of the line, which at this period they were reckoned. Suffrein had four 50-gun ships, and Hughes only one: in seventy-fours and sixty-fours the French had twelve, and the English eleven ships. The numbers of guns were—English, 794; French, 954.

mine. Thousands of the poor natives of the Carnatic, who had fled from Hyder to seek refuge under the guns of Fort St. George, were the first to feel these horrors: they died by hundreds, and they soon had fellow-sufferers. The roads that led to the town, the streets of the town itself, were strewed with the dead and dying; and nothing was heard but cries, and moans, and unavailing prayers for relief addressed to men who had not a grain of rice to spare, and who might soon be subjected to the same want and agony. It is said that 10,000 souls perished before supplies of rice were obtained from Bengal and other parts.

Four or five days after the departure of Sir Edward Hughes, Sir Richard Bickerton put into Madras-roads with a squadron of ships of war and land troops from England; but, having no provisions to spare after his long and tedious voyage, and considering it to be at once his duty and the only mode of securing his safety—menaced by the monsoon and by the vast superiority of Suffrein—to join the admiral, he put again to sea, and ran round Cape Comorin and up the western coast to Bombay. Shortly after Sir Eyre Coote, in a deplorable state of health, set sail for Calcutta. The command devolved to General Stuart, who sent 500 men to reinforce the garrison at Negapatam, 400 Europeans to co-operate with the Bombay army under Goddard (who was preparing to invade the dominions of Hyder from the west), and 300 Europeans into the Circars, where a French invasion was expected, but never took place. In fact, both Bussy and Suffrein became inactive at the very moment when activity would have been attended with the greatest chance of success. They did not attack Negapatam, when its garrison was weak and unprepared; they did not intercept or attempt to intercept the weak squadron of Sir Richard Bickerton, who passed them and repassed them at no great distance; they made no attempt against Madras when it was panic-stricken and famine-stricken, and they allowed the place to be revictualled from the Circars and from Bengal, though a few frigates might have stopped the grain-ships and compelled a surrender through hunger. Various causes may be imagined as contributing to this passiveness, such as shattered and ill-repaired ships, tempestuous weather, poverty, and a lack of provisions or stores in the French quarters; but the greatest cause of all probably was the declining health and spirit of Hyder. Tippoo, his son and heir, was gone to the Malabar coast with an army of 20,000 men and a French corps 400 strong. Colonel Humberstone Mackenzie was pressing on Mysore from the south, and was preparing for the siege of Palagatcherry, not many marches from Seringapatam, having dispersed the Mysorean army that attempted to cover the fort, when the approach of Tippoo constrained him to retreat towards the coast. On his way back Mackenzie blew up several forts which he had taken in his advance. He halted at Paniany, a seaport town about 35 miles from Calicut, and there resolved to defend himself against Tippoo and the French, who, during the latter part of his march, had pressed closely on his rear and caused him some loss.

On the following morning (the 28th of November), before day broke and before he could put the place in some defensive order, he was attacked by the enemy in four columns advancing from different points, and being guided or headed by the French. His sepoys were driven in at one point, and two or three of his guns were taken before the British-born part of his troops got under arms; but presently the pride of Highland regiments, the gallant 42nd, advanced to the charge, and drove French and Mysoreans before them at the point of the bayonet, and with a terrible slaughter, for the columns had got mixed and confused, and Tippoo had blocked up the roads and avenues with masses of horse and foot, who had no inclination to fight at close quarters themselves, but who impeded the retreat to those that had engaged. At last, however, the whole host withdrew, leaving nothing behind them but killed and wounded. The lesson he thus received was a severe one, and it is not credible that Tippoo either contemplated making another attack upon lines that were every hour becoming stronger, and that were

defended by 900 choice British troops besides sepoys, or proceeding by blockade to reduce a town which was *open* to the sea, and situated on a coast where the entire population favoured the English cause.

But at this juncture Tippoo received intelligence of his father's death, and it behoved him to look after his inheritance, for he had brothers and cousins. He therefore turned his back upon Paniany, and made all haste to secure the musnud and the treasure. Hyder Ali died of a disease known to the Hindus under the name of the raj-poro or rajah-boil, from its being supposed to be peculiar to persons of royal rank—an Indian king's-evil—and called by the Mohammedans the "crab," from a fancied resemblance to that creature in the swelling behind the neck, or the upper portion of the back, which is the first indication of the disorder. French physicians and surgeons were called in, but their science was as ineffectual as the conjuring and the charms of the native practitioners in curing a dangerous disease in an octogenarian.*

The "Tiger"—for such, being translated, is the appropriate name of his son and successor—had reached the manly age of thirty years when he assumed the reins of government, with an army of 90,000 men, a treasury containing three crores of rupees in hard money, and a mass of booty, jewels, and other valuables, estimated at an immense amount. With these resources, with the French alliance, and with a passion for war and aggrandizement, Tippoo scorned all overtures for a peace with the English—overtures which his wiser father would certainly have accepted, if he had lived a few months or a few weeks longer. Having performed the last duties to the remains of Hyder, he hastened to join the main army of Mysore, well provided with money and presents to secure their allegiance. This was at the end of December. On the 4th of January (1783), General Stuart took the field against him. The Mysorean army, though joined by 900 French, 2000 sepoys, 250 Caffres, and twenty-two field-pieces, all sent by the French from Cuddalore, retreated before Stuart, whose entire force consisted of about 14,000 men—but nearly 3000 of these were British, and crossed the river Arnee in disorderly haste. Tippoo had recalled his garrison from Arcot and other places, and it became evident that he was evacuating the whole of the Carnatic. He was not, however, flying so much from Stuart as flying to defend his own dominions. Colonel Humberstone Mackenzie, soon after the retiring of Tippoo from the Malabar coast, marched his sepoys by land, and sent his Highlanders and other British by sea, northward to the coast of Canara to co-operate with a part of the army from Bombay, in reducing some of the richest provinces or dependencies of Mysore. The march was long, the voyage stormy, but the junction of the forces moving to meet each other from such opposite and distant points was effected in the course of the month of January, when General Mathews, who had arrived at Bombay, from England, with king's troops, in the preceding autumn, took upon himself the command of the whole. The fort of Onore was taken by storm, the range of rocks which runs between the coast and Bednore, and which varies in height from 4000 to 5000 feet above the level of the sea, was scaled, the steep ghauts, though defended at intervals by batteries, were cleared by the bayonet, and on the 26th of January the rich capital of Bednore surrendered to Mathews without firing a gun. It is said that this easy conquest was owing to the small affection entertained by the governor and garrison and the people of the country to their new master Tippoo, or to some old animosities and grudges existing between him and the governor.

With the capital the English got possession of a considerable portion of that fertile province. Most of the other forts surrendered at or before a summons; but Ananpore and Mangalore held out. Anan-

* The precise date of the birth of Hyder Ali is not ascertained, but he is supposed to have been at least 80 years old when he died. His body was secretly deposited in the obscure tomb of his father at Colar; but Tippoo subsequently caused it to be removed to the superb mausoleum at Seringapatam, which is still endowed and carefully kept up by the English.

pore was carried by storm, and Mangalore, on the coast, surrendered as soon as a breach was made. The further operations of this combined force were hampered by quarrels and complaints about the division of the spoil. General Mathews refused to divide any part with the officers and soldiers, which was the more illiberal and irrational as the men had received no pay for many months. Colonel MacLeod, Colonel Humberstone Mackenzie, and Major Shaw left the army and repaired to Bombay to lay their complaints before the governor and council of that presidency. Upon their representations Mathews was superseded, and Colonel MacLeod, raised to the rank of brigadier-general, was sent back to Bednore, to take the command. Humberstone Mackenzie and Major Shaw accompanied MacLeod; but on their voyage down the coast they were attacked, in a weak small vessel, by five Mahratta pirates, who killed or wounded nearly every Englishman on board. Major Shaw was dispatched outright; Colonel Mackenzie, one of the best officers that had ever served in India, died of his wounds; and MacLeod was carried into Gheriah.

In the mean while Mathews had been acting like a madman: he had scattered his army all over the country in contemptible mud forts or open towns; he had sent the 42nd back to the coast; and he had fixed his head-quarters in the city of Bednore, without laying in a stock of ammunition and provisions, or doing anything to strengthen the fort. He was in this state of stupid security when Tippoo, on the 9th of April, appeared in the immediate neighbourhood with an immense army, which secured the ghauts and cut off all communication between the coast and the town. Mathews threw himself into the fort of Bednore, but any prolonged resistance was impossible, and, very honourable terms being offered by Tippoo, he capitulated on the last day of April. But instead of permitting the general and his troops to withdraw to the coast, according to the terms of the capitulation, Tippoo bound them with chains or ropes, and sent them into Mysore to be thrown into horrible dungeons, excusing his conduct by accusing Mathews of purloining some of the public treasure which he had agreed to leave in the fort.* But this mode of treating prisoners was all along a fixed rule of conduct both with Hyder and his son. After this success Tippoo went through the ghauts and down to the seaport town of Mangalore, in which the 42nd and some fragments of Mathews's army had thrown themselves. This was considered a most important point, as the harbour was the best on the coast of Canara; and about the middle of May, Tippoo and his French allies invested Mangalore. They counted on a short and easy conquest; but the siege detained them from more important operations for months, and after all Mangalore was not taken.

The sudden departure of the main army of the Mysoreans had left General Stuart scarcely any enemies to contend with in the Carnatic except the French and their sepoys, who remained behind their fortified lines at Cuddalore. Sir Eyre Coote had returned to the coast to resume the chief command, but a third fit had proved fatal to him, and he had died on the 26th of April, three days after landing at Madras. Stuart appeared before the French lines on the 7th of June, but there was no proper concert or co-operation between him and Admiral Hughes, who had returned to the coast. The French had been allowed time to erect works that were really formidable, and part of Suffrein's fleet, being left unmolested in the harbour of Cuddalore, was enabled to lend material assistance. And, as if time enough had not been given them to complete their preparations, Stuart lay from the 7th to the 13th of June before the French lines doing nothing. If he considered the co-operation of the fleet as essential—which it certainly was—he ought to have waited a day or two longer.

* Mathews had certainly gained a sad character for rapacity and selfishness; but Tippoo's accusation was probably not more true than the charge brought against him by his own army, which made the amount of plunder he had secured amount to more than 800,000*l.* in money, besides jewels! Bednore had once been a very wealthy city, but it had been visited too often by Hyder to be very rich now.

But, on the 13th, he began to attack in three columns at three different points. His signals were misunderstood, the attacks were not made simultaneously, and the French making a sortie did terrible execution upon his disjointed army; and after he had broken into their lines at one point, and carried and occupied some of their works, he was compelled to retreat to his camp. In this unfortunate assault a very important military doubt was removed, and that was whether native troops, under any training and under the best officers, would stand the bayonet charge of European troops. A battalion of Bengal sepoys, a part of the force which had marched from Calcutta with Colonel Pearse, not only stood a charge but drove back the French at the point of their own bayonets, and with severe loss.

On the very next day Sir Edward Hughes appeared in the offing, but Suffrein appeared at the same time, or nearly so, and got between the English fleet and Cuddalore. The two admirals, sometimes in sight of the lines and the English camp, and sometimes out of sight, tacked and manœuvred from the 13th to the 20th, each trying to get the weather-gage or some advantage over the other. But on the 20th Suffrein engaged at long shots, firing for twenty minutes before a single shot was returned by the British line. Then, the two fleets being somewhat closer, Hughes replied with a warm cannonade; but Suffrein, who had the advantage of the wind, chose his own distance, and never brought his ships to very close quarters. Four or five of Hughes's ships were so unmanageable that they fell off to leeward and could scarcely be brought into action at all. Some of Suffrein's were so leaky that the crews were obliged, during the action, to divide their labours between their pumps and their guns. As it grew dark the two old antagonists separated, each with a good number of killed and wounded on his decks, but without either capturing or losing a single ship: and thus indecisively ended the fifth and last engagement between Sir Edward Hughes and M. de Suffrein. The next morning the French were out of sight; but on the 22nd Sir Edward Hughes discovered them at anchor in Pondicherry road, and gave them an invitation to another battle, which they declined. Hughes, declining to attack them where they were, put into Madras, and Suffrein immediately got his whole fleet into the harbour of Cuddalore, where he landed every man he could spare to assist Bussy in defending the lines against General Stuart. Altogether the force now collected within these works must have been equal or superior to the force outside of them. This encouraged the French to attempt several sorties and surprises, which were not however very successful. In one of them, made at the dead of night, several Frenchmen were wounded and taken prisoners, and among them was a brave young sergeant, whose youth, gallantry, and superior manners attracted the attention of Colonel Wangenheim, who was serving under General Stuart with a corps of Hanoverians, and who had the young man conveyed to his own tent, where he was treated with every possible kindness. That wounded young sergeant was Charles John Bernadotte, afterwards General of the French republic, Prince and Marshal of the empire, Prince of Ponte Corvo, Crown Prince of Sweden, and afterwards Charles John XIV., King of Sweden, Norway, &c.*

A few days after this, when Stuart was expecting to be reinforced by Colonel Fullarton, and was preparing for another desperate assault, the news reached Madras that a treaty of peace had been concluded between France and England. A flag of truce was immediately dispatched to M. Bussy, who, though he had not received any French dispatches, and though even the intelligence of the English was not official, agreed at once not only to a cessation of hostilities by sea and land, but also to invite Tippoo to be a party in these pacific arrangements. The Mysorean at the time was ruining his

* Colonel Wilks, "Sketches of the South of India." The interest of the anecdote is completed by the fact that more than twenty years after, when Bernadotte took possession of Hanover as a conqueror, he met the kind-hearted veteran, then General Wangenheim, and testified to him his grateful recollection of what had passed in front of the lines at Cuddalore.

Group of Polygars. From Armed Figures in the collection of Sir Samuel Meyrick.

No. 14.

army in ineffectual attempts to take a half-ruined fort and town. Though alarmed at the prospect of being left alone in the war, he did not seem very anxious for peace, for more than a month passed before M. Bussy received any answer to his letter. His tone even then was high, his vakeels intimating that everything the English had taken from him or his father must instantly be restored, and not speaking quite so plainly as to the restitutions to the English on his part. Lord Macartney, however, sent three commissioners to accompany his vakeels to Seringapatam in order to treat there. Tippoo all the while continued his siege, and made several desperate efforts to get possession of Mangalore before entering upon negotiations. Nor were military operations suspended by the English. Colonel Fullarton, an excellent officer, who had arrived from England with some of the reinforcements at the end of the preceding year, was making a rapid progress in the country beyond Tanjore when he was called back to the coast to assist Stuart in that premeditated attack which was stopped by the news of peace. He had taken (on the 2nd of June) the important fortress of Daraporam, in the province of Coimbatoor, which opened one of the roads to Seringapatam, and was only about 140 miles from that capital. "This valuable place," says Fullarton himself, "affords ample supplies of grain and cattle, is capable of considerable defence, and is far advanced in the enemy's country, being equally distant from the two coasts. Although the position of an army there would always be of eminent advantage, it was more peculiarly so when we reduced it, because Tippoo Sultaun had recovered Bednore, captured General Mathews, and invested Mangalore. The southern army [the army which Fullarton commanded was so called] was not in sufficient strength to think of marching to Seringapatam, and was so far from being able to oppose the whole power of Tippoo, that we could not even afford to garrison Daraporam, and were obliged to destroy the fortifications. Yet we might assuredly have reduced the rich tract that lies below the mountains of Mysore, which would probably have forced Tippoo Sultaun to raise the siege of Mangalore, and march his main body against us; or, if Tippoo had persisted against Mangalore, we should have amply subsisted the army, have reduced a valuable territory, and prepared for more important conquests. But General Stuart's orders to march towards him at Cuddalore obliged me to relinquish those advantages."* Fullarton, however, left a garrison in Dindigul, another important fortress, built on a granite rock, which he had gallantly taken by storm, and made other arrangements to keep open his communications, and to facilitate his return towards the heart of Mysore. Colonel Forbes, whom he left behind him in the south, carried out these arrangements with much ability, and established friendly relations on all sides.

When the main English army was withdrawn from before the lines of Cuddalore, Lord Macartney reinforced Fullarton with about 1000 Europeans and with four battalions of sepoys, and instructed him to resume the campaign which Stuart had interrupted. After reducing the numerous polygars of Tinivelly, who had all thrown off their allegiance to the Company at the com-

* "A View of the English Interests in India;" and "An Account of the Military Operations in the Southern Parts of the Peninsula during the Campaigns of 1782, 1783, and 1784;" by William Fullarton of Fullarton, M.P. Stuart certainly spoilt this promising campaign. The whole of his conduct had given universal dissatisfaction. Lord Macartney, as soon as the truce was concluded with M. Bussy, submitted a motion to the council at Madras, whose commands and instructions had been repeatedly disobeyed and despised by the general, that Stuart should be dismissed from the Company's service. The motion was unanimously adopted. Stuart then insisted that he had a right to retain the command of all the king's troops that were serving on that coast—and it appears to us that in ordinary circumstances this right could not be disputed—and he spoke loudly of using force against force. Decisive steps were necessary, and Lord Macartney was bold enough to take them. He dispatched his private secretary (the present Sir John Barrow, we believe) and the town adjutant, with a party of sepoys, to take the general prisoner in his villa near Madras. Stuart, who appears to have offered no resistance whatever, was carried to the fort, and in a day or two shipped off quietly for England.

mencement of Hyder's invasion, and who had been ravaging the country from Madura to Cape Comorin, being assisted or encouraged by the Dutch at Colombo, who kept up a traffic and correspondence with the cape from the opposite coast of Ceylon; after reducing a number of their forts and carrying one of their forests—which, like the Cingalese of Ceylon, they considered their best fortresses—and reducing these polygars to their former state of quiet and tribute; and after chastising the hill colleries, who had been committing horrible excesses,—Colonel Fullarton, with 16,000 fighting men, and many more thousands of camp-followers, continued his march to Dindigul and Daraporam without money or any other means of supply, except such magazines of the enemy as he might be enabled to reduce. He was, however, well provided with artillery, shot, and gunpowder, which had been collected from the southern garrisons; and the Rajah of Travancore, who had given a cordial support to Colonel Humberstone Mackenzie, engaged to furnish some stores and provisions in the event of his moving against the southern coast possessions of Tippoo. A correspondence was also opened with the Zamorin, or ancient Hindu sovereign of Calicut, and with the other rajahs on the Malabar coast, whom Hyder had dispossessed of their sovereignties, and most barbarously treated. All these princes or chiefs, eager for repossession and revenge, agreed to contribute what little aid they could; and other parties, less interested in the overthrow of Tippoo, occasionally furnished some stores and provisions, and took bills upon the presidency of Madras in payment. But Fullarton adopted other measures, which contributed in a much greater degree to facilitate his progress, to insure success, and to gain the good-will and esteem of all parties. He gave up some paltry duties, which former commanders had been accustomed to levy upon all articles bought or sold in the bazaar or market of the army, for the sole benefit of themselves and staffs; he completely checked plundering by hanging two or three of the first offenders; he paid the greatest respect to the deep-rooted religious prejudices of the natives, and he enforced that respect on the European soldiery; and, having no money to pay, he endeavoured to gain credit for his drafts by kind treatment, and friendly explanations as to the faith and stability of the company. He also made a material change in the mode and order of marching, which hitherto had been by files, so that a large army was many miles in length with little communication between the distant parts of the line; he established a system of intelligence, the want of which precaution had led to many disasters in this war; and so complete and effective was this system, that statements were procured, not only of the military force of the enemy, but also of the grain deposited anywhere within 200 miles of his front and flank. Several hundred people—cunning natives, who have a natural genius for the occupation of scouts and spies, and who, after inspection, can model you a fortress in clay, and show to a nicety its strong and its weak points—were constantly employed on these services, and confidential intelligencers were established at every considerable town in Mysore, in the durbars of the rajahs, in the very camp of Tippoo. "On the first notice of any material incident, these intelligencers dispatched small cadjeans,* which were more rapidly conveyed to me than any horse could travel, by tappals or relays of colleries, stationed at moderate distances, and unsuspected by the enemy. Harcarrahs, peons, lubby-merchants, and sepoys were also constantly traversing all parts of the enemy's country; others carrying dispatches to Madras and the southern provinces, to Travancore, to Cochin, to the Malabar rajahs, to General MacLeod at Cannanore, to Colonel Campbell at Mangalore, and to the residency at Telicherry. The intelligence of every individual was carefully registered, and tended to confirm or to refute the various intimations constantly arriving. By these means, during many months of continued

* "Cadjeans," says Colonel Fullarton in a note, "are thick leaves resembling the papyrus, on which the Gentoos write." They are strips of the enormous leaves of the talipot or talipat tree, universally used for writing among the Cingalese and the people of the extreme south of the continent.

Telicherry.—From a Painting by C. Kirkhall.

No. 22.

marching through a country almost unexplored, we never once failed in our supplies, nor did any material incident escape our knowledge."* For a short time Fullarton halted in the neighbourhood of Daraporam, waiting for intelligence from the three commissioners; but, on the 16th of October, when he was informed, by an official letter from the residency of Telicherry, that Tippoo had recommenced active hostilities at Mangalore, he took immediate measures to resent the insult.

His mind and that of the council at Madras had been divided between two plans —1. To march right across the peninsula through an enemy's country, 500 miles in extent, to the relief of Mangalore. 2. Or to advance upon Seringapatam, and either overthrow the dynasty of Hyder in their capital, or compel Tippoo to hurry from the coast in order to save that capital. He determined upon the latter movement, though not by the direct road, which offered no intermediate place of strength in which to lodge stores and provisions for the prosecution of his undertaking, or in which to secure a retreat in case of a reverse. But there was a more circuitous route which presented this essential recommendation, and several other military advantages. Palagatcherry, nearer to the coast, had been completely rebuilt by Hyder, was furnished with most of the advantages of European fortification, and was considered one of the strongest fortresses in India: the mountains bounding the pass which it commanded were covered by thick forests through which there was no passage, and the plain below, a long and wide extent of deep rice-grounds, was cut and intersected, like a chess-board, by the Paniany River, and might be defended by a small body of infantry against all Tippoo's cavalry. The fort further commanded the only practicable communication between the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar: it opened the means of supply from Travancore, Cochin, Calicut, and other places; its occupation by the English would afford confidence to the Zamorin and the other disaffected chiefs from Cochin to Goa, who were all struggling to shake off the yoke of Tippoo, and it would leave Fullarton at liberty to disguise his movements, and to proceed to the siege of Seringapatam by the route of Coimbatoor and the pass of Gudjereddy, or by the sea-coast route to Calicut, and then through the pass of Damalcherry. The colonel therefore determined to capture Palagatcherry; and, on the 18th of October, he began his march, apparently with a confident hope that it would end under the walls of Seringapatam. Carrying several little forts on his way, and passing through a country abounding with dry grain, rice, cattle, and wood, he soon reached the high ground of Palatchy, whence the streams run east and west to the Coromandel and Malabar seas. But beyond this point his progress was slow and most difficult, for he had to force his way through a forest twenty miles in depth, with frequent torrent-courses and ravines within it. These ravines had to be filled up before it was possible to drag the heavy guns across them;—innumerable large trees which obstructed the passage required to be cut down and drawn out of the track, and then the whole road was to be formed before the carriages of the army could pass. Fourteen days were spent in these arduous labours, and in getting the materials of the army through that dense forest; and, to increase their toils and discomforts, a tremendous rain, altogether unexpected as being unusual in other parts of India at that season of the year, began as they first entered the wood, and never ceased till they had cleared their way through it. The ravines were filled with water, the bullocks lost their footing, and the soldiers were obliged to drag the guns and the carriages nearly the whole of the way. There was no possibility of pitching tents, or of procuring for them any kind of cover or comfort. Difficulties and operations like these elevate the character of the Indian service, and they were frequent. Goddard and Pearse, for example, in their long marches, had often to make the road by which they were to advance.

On the 4th of November the van and the main body emerged from the forest, and reached a position on the Paniany

* Fullarton.

River. On the following day a part of the engineer stores arrived, and the river was crossed. The Pettah, or open town of Palagatcherry, was presently occupied, and a fire was opened on the east and north faces of the fort. But it was the 9th before the heavy battering train could be brought to the encampment—"after a succession of toils," says Fullarton, "that would appear incredible if related in detail." On the night of the 15th the garrison called out for quarter, and delivered up a place capable of making a long resistance. The English found in the fort 50,000 pagodas in money, together with a very large supply of grain, guns, powder, shot, and military stores. The son of the Zamorin of Calicut,—or, as the colonel calls him, with more solemnity, "the heir apparent,"—remained with Fullarton during the siege; and at its triumphant conclusion he urgently solicited the English commander to restore him to the dominions of which Hyder had deprived his family. Fullarton declared that, in the event of his moving by Calicut, he might hope to effect his re-establishment in that city, the ancient capital of the Zamorins; and, as a pledge of his good intentions, he put him in immediate possession of the territory of Palagat, an ancient dependency of Calicut, only requiring from him that he should furnish grain for the army while in that vicinity, and imposing no other obligation until the conclusion of the war, or until the government of Madras should make some regular agreement with him. Fullarton's intercourse with the Hindu prince, and with the Hindu population of the country, was carried on by means of a large body of Brahmins, who constantly attended the army, and whose entire friendship he had secured. Accompanied by these influential agents and interpreters, the colonel frequently rode through the adjacent villages, assembled the head people, and assured them of protection. During these proceedings he maintained his correspondence with Brigadier-general Mac-Leod, who had been liberated after a short captivity at Gheriah, and also with Colonel Campbell, who commanded in Mangalore, intimating his intention of approaching their coast, and his earnest wish for a joint movement and an advance in full force against Seringapatam. But the English residency at Telicherry could not, or would not, furnish some additional artillery and stores; Sir Edward Hughes, who was then at Telicherry with part of the fleet, declined sending a vessel with stores to Paniany; and Mac-Leod represented, that, though most willing to unite in prosecuting the movement to Seringapatam, he could not put his army in motion in less than two months for want of bullocks and other things. Fullarton, therefore, gave up the notion of proceeding by the sea-coast to Calicut, and the pass of Damalcherry, and took the route that led by Coimbatoor to the pass of Gudjereddy. He was annoyed on his march by a large body of Mysorean cavalry, who threw rockets; but, on the 26th of November, he sat down before the fort of Coimbatoor, which surrendered to him before he could finish a battery. Here, too, he found a great quantity of grain, ammunition, and stores. Money there was none; but the adjacent fields were covered with rich crops, which promised resources for the future. Coimbatoor, though a place of no strength, was important from the high estimation in which it was held by the Hindu population, as the very ancient capital of a rajahship, where no Mussulman conqueror had ever penetrated, and where the old gods of India had never been disturbed, until a comparatively recent period. Every ancient rajah flew to arms, or made preparations for doing so; all the Hindus, between the ghauts and the sea, encouraged by the presence of General Mac-Leod, the advance of Fullarton, and the still continuing failure and losses of Tippoo before Mangalore, were in open revolt, or ripe for it; and in the country above the ghauts, in the very centre of Mysore, Fullarton's Brahmins had excited the Hindus, who were far more numerous even there than their conquerors, and who engaged to render every possible assistance to the English arms.* The Coorga

* "A recent conspiracy," says Colonel Fullarton, "had occurred in Seringapatam, menacing the releasement of the English prisoners, the exclusion of Tippoo's family, and the re-establishment of the ancient Rana, or Gentoo so-

Fullarton crossing a Mountain stream, in his March on Palagatcherry. From a Drawing by Daniell.

No. 15.

rajah, a powerful chief under the mountains that separate the Malabar country from Mysore, was actively asserting his independence; and General MacLeod, strong in Europeans, artillery, and native corps, moved from point to point, sometimes by land and sometimes by sea, to keep up this flame all along the coast, and to co-operate wherever his services might be most useful. Nor were these all the enemies that were girding in Mysore; for General Jones was at the same time advancing in the Cuddapah country, or northern and inland possessions of Tippoo, where his power was ill-established, and his person and government not more popular than they were on the coast. "The army under my own direction," says Fullarton, "was perhaps the strongest force belonging to Europeans that had ever been employed in India. The countries we had reduced extended 200 miles in length, afforded provisions for 100,000 men, and yielded an annual revenue of 600,000*l.*, while every necessary arrangement had been made for the regular collection of these resources. The fort and pass of Palagatcherry secured our western flank, and the intermediate position of General MacLeod's army between Palagatcherry and Tippoo's main army at Mangalore, together with the singular combination of ravines, rivers, and embankments that intersect the Malabar countries, and the mountains that divide them from Mysore (the passes through which were occupied by our friends the disaffected rajahs), rendered it almost impracticable for Tippoo to move in that direction against our new acquisitions. To attack them by a movement through the passes of the ghauts, on the eastern flank towards Salem and Erode, supposed a circuit of 500 or 600 miles from the position of Tippoo's army before Mangalore. His movement, therefore, against these acquisitions could only be attempted by the central pass from Mysore at Gudjereddy, which is not fifty miles in front from Coimbatoor: and the possession of that pass assured us an immediate access to the capital of Tippoo's kingdom, commanding a communication with our new acquisitions, and with the company's southern provinces."* The Coorg, or Coorga, rajah, whose territories extended to within thirty miles of Seringapatam, promised abundant supplies; and the more faith was placed in these promises, as the young Zamorin, who had faithfully kept his own engagements in furnishing grain abundantly, confirmed and guaranteed them. This prince likewise engaged that all the Hindu chiefs on the west would not only provide for the English during the siege of Seringapatam, but form magazines in strong positions among the mountains, and, if required, join with 20,000 or 30,000 nairs, all animated with hatred and revenge.

Fullarton had provided his army with ten days' grain, repaired the carriages, and was on the point of pushing forward to Tippoo's capital with the utmost rapidity, and with every assurance of success, when, on the 28th of November, he received the commands of the English commissioners, who were treating of peace at the durbar, and who were invested by the council at Madras with full authority over the army, to restore immediately all posts and forts, all the country lately reduced, and to retire within the limits occupied by the English on the 26th of July. Feeling himself at liberty neither to disregard this peremptory order nor to obey it to the extent of its literal signification, Fullarton recalled his own orders for advancing towards Seringapatam, stayed at Coimbatoor for further instructions, and sent letters to the commissioners on the Malabar coast, and an aide-de-camp

vereign of Mysore. In addition to this enumeration of advantages, we had every reason to rely on the Gentoo or Canara race, forming the great mass of inhabitants in Mysore, who had unequivocal proofs of my earnest zeal to support their interests and favourite family; while every circumstance of present situation or of future prospect seemed to mark this interesting moment as the crisis of the war."

* View of the English Interests in India, &c. Colonel Fullarton adds:—"Besides, as far as the system of defending front, flanks, and rear can ever be extended from the position of an army to the topographical circumstances of a country, it would enable us to secure those territories from any considerable irruptions. At this period, too, the chumba, or great crop, throughout the country was upon the ground, and, independently of the magazines in our front, promised ample provision."

to the council at Madras, to explain his situation, and the situation of Mangalore, which was still invested, and to prove that the forward movements contemplated and prepared by him would put the throne of Tippoo in the utmost danger. The colonel employed the interval which followed in adding to the completeness of his equipments, in collecting supplies in Dindigul, in procuring money at Tinivelly, and in bringing up arrack and ammunition from Cochin and Paniany. No soldier could abandon such a scheme as he had formed at the very moment when the prospect of success was brightest without a bitter pang. Ten days of march, with little or no fighting,—for there was no Mysorean army in the neighbourhood except irregular cavalry—would have brought Fullarton under the walls of Seringapatam; at that time ten more days might have sufficed for the reduction of that capital; the events of twenty-five years might have been anticipated, an inestimable amount of money and of blood might have been saved, the power of the British in the whole of the south of India might have been established, and a quarter of a century might have been won to the cause of order and tranquillity. But Fullarton had to feel the bitter pang;—the bright perspective which his arms had opened was destined to be smeared over by diplomatic ink and orders in council. About the middle of December he received another letter from the commissioners repeating their former instructions, and also the minutes of a consultation from the government at Madras, directing him to fulfil the order of unqualified restitution enjoined by the commissioners, as the preliminary of negotiation with Tippoo Sultaun. Upon this the army of the south began to retrace their steps towards Tanjore and Trichinopoly, to the dismay and grief of the poor Zamorin and the other Hindus who had openly committed themselves with Tippoo, in the belief that the army was not only to remain to protect their country, but to continue its triumphant progress until the power of the Mysorean should be no more. Fullarton had scarcely begun his backward march when events occurred which must have made the council and commissioners regret the positive orders they had sent. But, throughout, the commissioners had blundered, and had done nothing but mischief, partly through their own fault, and partly through the care taken by Tippoo to shut them out from all communication with the English army. Instead of going to the head-quarters of Tippoo, and following in his train like supplicants, these deputies ought to have remained with the main body of the British army, with the forces under Fullarton. They had scarcely got within the power of the enemy when they found themselves treated more like wretched hostages than ambassadors; they were commanded to send Colonel Campbell orders to evacuate Mangalore, at that moment almost the only security the English had for the lives of their officers and men who had fallen into the clutches of the "Tiger;" they were not allowed to enter Seringapatam, or to have any communication with their unfortunate countrymen imprisoned at Bangalore and other places; they were hurried down, through a most rough and inhospitable country, where some of their cattle, and even some of their attendants, perished through fatigue and want, to Tippoo's camp near Mangalore, and neither on their journey nor on their arrival there were they permitted any freedom of correspondence, all their letters being intercepted, and their bondage made so strict that even Fullarton's artful Brahmins, who got at everything else, could not get at them. From the camp these negotiators had the opportunity of witnessing some of Tippoo's proceedings, and of hearing of sundry others that took place before their arrival. Seeing how Mangalore was defended now, and reflecting how speedily it had been surrendered to General Mathews, he came to the conclusion that his governor, Rustum Ali Beg, must have been either a traitor or a coward; and therefore he cut off that poor governor's head. Yet, in truth, the place was contemptible, and scarcely defensible at all, except by troops like the 42nd, and an unyielding commander like Colonel Campbell. When the siege began the garrison consisted of about 700 British troops, counting officers and all, and about 3000 sepoys; while

Mysorean Cavalry.

No. 23.

Tippoo's force was estimated at 50,000 or 60,000 cavalry of all kinds, 30,000 disciplined infantry, 600 French infantry under the command of Colonel Cossigny, a small body of French, Dutch, Portuguese, and natives mixed, under the command of an officer of the King of France; having among them all nearly 100 pieces of artillery. Batteries were erected by the besiegers on the north, the east, and the south; on the west was the sea; the paltry fortifications on the northern side were knocked to pieces, and almost levelled; one broad breach was made after another; but every time the besiegers attempted to storm they were driven back at the point of the bayonet. That weapon was also employed in frequent sorties made by the garrison, wherein batteries were taken, guns spiked, and great slaughters committed. On one occasion, when the siege had lasted for months, a general assault was made from every side except the sea, which remained open and free to the garrison; but the result was most disastrous to Tippoo's army. By an unpardonable negligence in the presidency of Bombay, sufficient supplies were not thrown into the place, and Campbell and his brave companions were beginning to feel the approaches of famine, when news arrived of the conclusion of peace in Europe and in the Carnatic. M. Cossigny, after vainly endeavouring to prevail upon the Mysorean to join in the treaty, withdrew with the regular French troops under his command; but many French officers, with all the less regular European forces, remained to assist in the siege.

After many other cannonades and most fruitless attempts at storming, Tippoo consented to a cessation of hostilities, including Onore, which had made as heroic a defence as Mangalore itself, and another small fort on the coast, which had both been held by a mere handful of British troops. By this armistice Tippoo agreed to allow Colonel Campbell to purchase provisions in the country at the same rate as that paid in his own camp; but as soon as the English began to buy they found either that there was nothing to be sold, or that the prices were exorbitant. This was Tippoo's management. Twelve rupees were asked for a fowl. At last the country people were forbidden under penalty of ears and noses to sell anything for any price; and the English were reduced to the uncleanly diet of horse-flesh, rats, mice, frogs, snakes, and carrion-birds. It is said that they even shot and ate the jackals that descended by night in packs from the woods and hills to devour the bodies of the dead. Matters were in this state on the 22nd of November, when an English squadron appeared off the town. The ships were filled with the army of General MacLeod, who, in his anxiety to co-operate with the native chiefs along the coast, committed the monstrous absurdity of making a fresh agreement with Tippoo, and then sailed away without landing any provisions. This new agreement was a counterpart of the former one, and it was observed in the same manner. Instead of permitting the English garrison to purchase wholesome food, Tippoo allowed them to procure nothing but some damaged stores, so fetid and foul that the very dogs would not eat them. General MacLeod returned to Mangalore, but it was only to commit a fresh folly in again taking the word of Tippoo. This was on the 31st of December, or about a fortnight after Fullarton had begun his retrograde movement. Colonel Campbell had soon occasion to acquaint MacLeod that as soon as his back was turned the Mysorean again began to starve him. The general then sent a letter accusing Tippoo of broken faith. The Mysorean replied in a letter written by one of his Frenchmen—"It is one lie, or mensonge." This fired the blood of the Highlander, and he wrote again—"Permit me to inform you, prince, that this language is not good for you to give, or me to receive; and that, if I was alone with you in the desert, you would not dare to say these words to me."* MacLeod would have

* Colonel Wilks, Sketches of the South of India. General MacLeod concluded this curious letter with a curious challenge to Tippoo. "If," said he, "you have courage enough to meet me, take 100 of your bravest men on foot, and meet me on the sea-shore. I will fight you, and 100 of mine will fight with yours." A quarter of a century after this Highland challenge was sent, the English found in the palace at Seringapatam a book

done better by sending a vessel with some provisions to the famishing garrison. Indeed we can scarcely understand his proceedings on the coast, when for two or three months he seems never to have been very far from Mangalore. Colonel Fullarton, however, praises him for his active and spirited conduct; and no doubt, if the main army of the south had been allowed to continue its advance on Seringapatam, the value of the general's services might have been felt. But at the moment Fullarton began to retire, those services might have been suspended, and some time and care devoted to Campbell and his heroic garrison, who were now suffering the double calamities of disease and famine. Two-thirds of the men were sick and helpless, and those that remained on duty could scarcely carry their muskets and cartouch-boxes. The number of deaths was great for so small a force, and daily increasing; it must naturally have occurred to Colonel Campbell that there was no use in keeping that single and by no means good or defensible position when all the rest of the coast and country was to be given back to the enemy; and at last, on the 23rd of January, 1784, after sustaining a siege and blockade of nine months, he agreed to quit Mangalore upon honourable conditions. Tippoo had lost before those rotten walls, by war, sickness, and desertion, nearly one-half of his immense army; but he considered the place as a charm on the possession of which the fortunes of his house depended, and he was made so happy by entering into it that for once he kept his engagements, and allowed Campbell, with his troops and baggage, sick and wounded, to march unmolested to Telicherry. At that place Campbell died soon after, worn out by the fatigues and sufferings he had undergone. General Mathews, a very different man, who had capitulated at Bednore, was deliberately murdered in prison, together with several of his officers.

Mangalore was scarcely evacuated, and Fullarton had not reached the old boundaries, when he received orders from Madras to reassemble his army, to prepare for a recommencement of hostilities, and to regain, if possible, possession of Palagatcherry, which had been left in the hands of the Zamorin. But before any succour could be sent to him, that Hindu prince was surrounded by Tippoo's troops, who scared him and his adherents out of the fort by sacrificing a number of much venerated Brahmins, and exposing their heads on poles. Palagatcherry was therefore to be regained only by a fresh siege. As Fullarton was concentrating his forces, and was receiving considerable reinforcements from Fort St. George, and some heavy ordnance from that place and from Tanjore, a letter reached him from the commissioners, dated near Mangalore, on the 11th of February, or just nineteen days after the evacuation of that place. This letter spoke of the continued enmity of Tippoo, and convinced Fullarton that a renewal of the war was unavoidable—an opinion which was soon afterwards confirmed by a letter from General MacLeod. He immediately began to advance with the main body of his army, and was again flattering himself with the hope of being the conqueror of Seringapatam, when he received intelligence that preliminaries of a peace had been exchanged between the commissioners and Tippoo Sultaun, and along with this intelligence orders from the commissioners to restore the forts and countries of Carroor and Daraporam, but to keep possession of Dindigul, and station a strong force there until the English prisoners should all be liberated from their horrible captivity. The commissioners, the governor and council at Madras, every man in India, knew that there was no confidence to be placed in the faith, humanity, or moderation of the "Tiger;" and they must

entitled "The King of Histories," written under the dictation or immediate directions of Tippoo himself, and containing orientally exaggerated accounts of his own bravery and exploits. In this manuscript the challenge was alluded to, and Tippoo's answer to it—or, at least, an answer he said he had sent to it—was inserted. After calling MacLeod a Nazarene, and all the Nazarenes idolaters and monsters addicted to every vice, this note went on—"If thou hast any doubt of all this, descend, as thou hast written, from thy ships, with thy forces, and taste the flavour of the blows inflicted by the hands of the holy warriors, and behold the terror of the religion of Mohammed."—Of course the "King of Histories" ends this story by saying that the British general fled immediately.

have foreseen the bloodshed and devastation which awaited the wretched Hindus of Coorg, Canara, and Mysore—calamities far more terrible than the expulsion of the Rohillas from Rohilcund, and befalling a people far more tranquil, amiable, helpless, and interesting than those soldiers of fortune;*—but the negotiations were justified by the tenor of instructions and orders received from the British government and from the court of directors, by the actual state of our political relations in Europe, and by the impoverished condition of the company's territories. Yet assuredly France would not have gone into a new war solely to defend Tippoo; and, as for poverty, Fullarton had shown that an army might be supported in the enemy's country without money, and the capture of Seringapatam and the reduction of Mysore would have enriched the company not merely with a great present booty, but also with a large permanent revenue. The retention of the districts which Fullarton had conquered would by their revenues alone have soon paid the expenses of another campaign; and nothing but absolute fatuity could have prevented another campaign from finishing the story of Tippoo Sultaun. It was, however, that tyrant's fate that he should be left to scourge his kind, and to renew his contest with the English when he should be again encouraged by the French.

The treaty with him was finally concluded on the 11th of March, upon the condition of a restitution by both parties of all that they had gained in the war. The tales told by the English prisoners of war, whom he now liberated, excited horror and indignation, and by themselves alone rendered the duration of any peace with him very problematical. Parts of these narratives will not bear relating; but they proved that Tippoo had committed acts which English soldiers would never forget or forgive.

Compared with the danger and despondency at the beginning of the war, or with the result of the national contests in other parts of the globe, even this was a most honourable and advantageous peace. The real danger in the Carnatic was over as soon as Sir Eyre Coote gained the battle of Porto Novo. Many errors of judgment were committed in the management of the war, and the vices of jealousy, selfishness, and rapacity were too frequently visible both in council and in the field; yet, nevertheless, taken as a whole, the war was highly creditable to the abilities, perseverance, and valour of Englishmen. The extent of their operations was something magnificent and astounding: it embraced the two sides of the vast triangle of India, from the mouths of the Ganges to Cape Comorin, and from Cape Comorin to Bombay and Surat and the Gulf of Cambay; and inland it nearly traversed the base of the triangle: countries hitherto known to the English only by name were penetrated and explored from end to end; and some of the most wonderful marches upon record were performed by the native troops in our service. Impressions were made that time and partial miscarriages would not easily efface: the Indians were impressed with the idea that no obstacles were insurmountable to the steady perseverance of the British and the troops they had trained; and the British learned for the first time the entire dependence

* These cruelties upon the Hindus of the Malabar coast were continued through several years, and were made more dreadful by a mixture of religious fanaticism, which for ages had been little known among the Mohammedans in India. In 1788 Tippoo paid a visit to Calicut, where he found the natives living peaceably in habitations scattered over the country. He compelled them to quit their habitations and reside in villages of 40 houses each; he then issued proclamations stating that they were a turbulent and rebellious people, that their women went shamelessly abroad with their faces uncovered and committed other obscene offences, and finally that, if they did not forsake their sinful practices and live like the rest of his subjects, he would march them all off to Mysore and make Mussulmans of them, whether they would or not. The very next year he returned to the country with his whole army, destroying pagodas and idols, and threatening to exterminate "the infidels of Malabar." Having surprised about 2000 nairs with their families, he gave them the alternative of a voluntary conversion to his faith, or a forcible conversion with immediate deportation from their native land. The poor prisoners chose the latter:—the rite of circumcision was forthwith performed on all the males, and the capricious tyrant finished the ceremony of conversion by compelling both sexes to eat beef—a monstrous act of impiety in Hindu faith.

that might be placed on the constancy and courage of their sepoys. It was not possible, after what had been achieved, that a panic, a consternation and indecision, such as had disgraced us in the Carnatic in the summer and autumn of 1780, should occur again. Thus India was saved when our empire in the west was lost. No Englishman, we presume, can even now reflect without a shudder upon the effect which would have been produced in Europe if the loss of our Indian empire had been added to the loss of the thirteen provinces of North America.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

But the expenses of this Indian war had been, particularly in the early stages, tremendous; and, as the far greater part of the money could come only from Bengal, Warren Hastings had put no trifling burden upon his conscience to procure it. His only principle of action was that the Carnatic must be rescued, that India must be saved, cost what it might; and, as the first step to that salvation was the obtaining of money, he determined that money should be obtained by whatever means lay in his power. Some of the neighbouring princes that owed their political existence to the power of English arms, and that were entirely dependent upon the government of Calcutta, were known to possess hidden treasures of vast amount. The plan was to squeeze them. The first to whom Hastings applied the pressure was Cheyte Sing, the Rajah of Benares, whose territory had been transferred to the Company by the Nabob of Oude, in a treaty concluded not by Hastings, but by Clavering, Monson, and Francis. Cheyte Sing had, however, been left in possession upon condition of paying a fixed annual tribute to the Company. At the first breaking out of the war with France he was called upon by the governor-general for an extraordinary contribution amounting to about 50,000*l.*; and as he delayed payment he was fined in 2000*l.* more. In the following year (1779) another extraordinary contribution was demanded and paid, for Hastings employed his armies as collectors or receivers general. In 1780, when dangers and embarrassments were thickening around him, the governor-general demanded another contribution.* The rajah sent a confidential agent to Calcutta to plead poverty and to soften Hastings with two lacs of rupees, or about 20,000*l.*, which were offered in secret, and doubtless intended as a bribe. Hastings took the present, paid it over, though not till some time had passed, to the Company's treasury, and then exacted the contribution all the same. Cheyte Sing implored, remonstrated, and endeavoured to show that he had no money. Hastings knew better, and the troops were ordered to march to Benares. The rajah then found the 50,000*l.*, and 10,000*l.* more imposed as a fine. The next demand was not for money, but for troops. It is pretty evident, however, that troops were asked only as a means for getting at more rupees. A resolution was passed in the council at Calcutta, which now consisted of Wheler, Sir Eyre Coote, and Macpherson, that the Rajah of Benares, besides his tribute and the extraordinary contribution of five lacs to be paid annually till the end of the war, should furnish a certain force in cavalry for the service of the Company. Hastings hereupon made a prompt demand for 2000 horse. Cheyte Sing represented that he had only 1300 horse in all; and that these were indispensable to him in maintaining the police and collecting the revenues of his country. The governor-general then reduced his demand to 1500—to 1000. The rajah collected 500 horse and 500 matchlock men; sent word to Hastings that this force was at his orders, and that it

* In a letter to one of his agents, dated the 25th of June, 1780, the determined governor-general says—"The only difficulty we can possibly feel in the prosecution of the war will be from a want of money; and this difficulty may, I think, be easily obviated by your insisting upon Cheyte Sing's contributing his quota to the expenses of our advanced army, in lieu of being ordered to join it at the head of his own forces. Were he a zemindar dependent on any other government than our own, this would be insisted upon; *and, as his ability to advance a large sum seems to be universally acknowledged, why should he alone be exempted from the expenses, as well as the devastations, of war?*"

was all that he possibly could spare. It appears that no answer was returned to the rajah, and that what was really wanted was to find a ground of quarrel and occasion to accuse him of failing in the obedience which he owed to the Company as their dependant and vassal. Hastings had private dislikes and animosities against Cheyte Sing, and, though these, of themselves, and apart from the sovereign consideration of saving India, might not have led to the extreme acts of violence and spoliation adopted, they were not likely to qualify or soften those proceedings when they seemed justifiable and justified in the eyes of Hastings by the necessity of the case. "I was resolved," says he, "to draw from his guilt the means of relief to the Company's distresses. In a word, I had determined to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for his past delinquency."* In an agony of alarm at the governor-general's silence and at loud notes of preparation among the Company's forces, the rajah now sent to offer twenty lacs of rupees, or 200,000*l.*, in one round sum, for the public service. But Hastings now said that nothing less than fifty lacs, or half a million sterling, would satisfy him or supply the immediate wants of the public service; and he forthwith prepared to go in person to Benares in order to settle these and other weighty matters, all connected with money. "If I cannot do all that I wish, I will, at least, do all that I can," were words which he had uttered on a former occasion, and which contained the ordinary rule of his conduct. He was very guarded in the language which he held; few or none knew his real intentions or the full extent of them; and he began his journey as if he anticipated no danger and no possibility of resistance, taking with him little more than the body-guard which attended him on ordinary occasions. He even conducted Mrs. Hastings with him as far as Monghir.

Cheyte Sing came eastward as far as Buxar to meet the governor-general, attended by 600 horse. Hastings received the rajah with great pride and sternness, and refused to hold any private or confidential discourse. In his own words, the rajah "professed much concern to hear that I was displeased with him, and contrition for having given cause for it, assuring me that his zemindary, and all that he possessed, were at my devotion; and he accompanied his words by an action either strongly expressive of the agitation of his mind, or his desire to impress on mine a conviction of his sincerity—by laying his turban on my lap." But not the extremest sign of Eastern submission and devotion could turn the heart of Warren Hastings from its fixed purpose. On the 12th of August, "on the way to Benares," Hastings wrote to Sir Elijah Impey:—"As to the rajah, I can, at present, say nothing; his behaviour, except in ceremonials, has been so bad to me that I cannot commend it to others."* Continuing his journey with the rajah in his train, he entered Benares on the 14th of August, 1781, and the very next day, after again refusing any private conference, he sent to Cheyte Sing a long paper containing various complaints of past misconduct, and demands higher than any that had hitherto been made. As commanded, the rajah replied in the course of the day; but his reply

* Hastings's own narrative of the transactions at Benares, &c.

* *MS. Correspondence of Sir Elijah Impey.*—From these and some other expressions, we are induced to conclude that the governor-general was anxious to impress the chief justice with the notion that Cheyte Sing, who owed his establishment and existence as ruler of Benares to the English, had been, previously to the insurrection, undutiful and ungrateful to them. It is very probable too that Hastings by no uncommon casuistry had reasoned himself into the belief that the man that he was about to injure had previously injured him; nor is it at all improbable that the rajah had displayed some symptoms of ingratitude. If Cheyte Sing was grateful and steady in his attachments, and alien to plots and intrigues, then was he a most rare Indian prince. In this same letter, written on the road, the governor-general expresses his hope that the chief justice will travel into Oude. He says, "I wish you to see Benares, and I shall be glad to see you there; but you must regulate your visit thither by my return to it, of which I will give you timely notice—a precaution perhaps not necessary, as my motions are likely to be rapid, and as you are likely to meet with many stops in your way. . . . I shall make but about a week's stay at Benares, *though I fear I shall have much to do there.* I go on by land to Lucknow."

was considered evasive and impertinent; and at ten o'clock at night the governor-general gave Mr. Markham, his chosen resident at Benares, orders to arrest the rajah at an early hour the following morning, before the town-people should be stirring. Markham (a son of Dr. Markham, Archbishop of York) performed his service with two companies of sepoys and without any opposition or disturbance. But the arrest kindled a flame which went nigh to consume Hastings, and with him the fortunes of the English in India.

The rajah was popular among his own subjects; the indignity of such an arrest was not to be borne; the spirit of fanaticism co-operated with the spirit of love or affection for the old Hindu dynasty to which Cheyte Sing belonged. Benares was the holy city of India, being to the Brahmins what Mecca is to the Mohammedans, or Jerusalem to the Jews: it contained an enormous population, who claimed a superior sanctity from the place of their residence; it was thronged by pilgrims and devotees from all parts of Hindustan, from every place where the ancient faith had penetrated; and where that strange faith was once established no human power had been able to suppress it. It was this continual concourse of devotees that tended to fill the rajah's treasury, and much of the money that Hastings had wrung from him was supplied by the religious Hindu world. These pilgrims, who had travelled far to wash off their sins in the Ganges, where it was holiest, and to offer their prayers and oblations in Benares, were the most likely men in the world to resent any insult offered in that sacred city to the ruler of it; and moreover, the ordinary inhabitants of Benares, and the Hindu population of the whole country, were a far more robust, brave, and fiery race than the people of Calcutta or Moorshedabad, or any of the places in the lower provinces where Hastings had formed his estimate of the Hindu character. Markham had scarcely reported to the governor-general the ease with which he had performed his task, and the meekness with which Cheyte Sing had submitted to his fate, when there arose from the narrow, crowded streets the roar of ten thousand angry voices, and the cries of tens of thousands upon that; and then there followed a tramping, a rushing, and the rattle of arms. It has been imagined, from this sudden rising in arms, that the first insurgents consisted of a levy of troops which Cheyte Sing had been organizing for some time previously in order to oppose the English; but the greater part of the people in the upper provinces always wear arms, and the pilgrims carry weapons under their mantles to protect themselves in their long way-faring, or, when their resources are low or the opportunity tempting, to fill their stomachs and their purses. The rajah had not been removed from his palace, but left there with the two companies of sepoys placed over him as a guard. Thither the living streams flowed and concentrated from many points. Such was the security of the English managers, that the sepoys had been left with their muskets and bayonets, but without any cartridges. When the danger was seen, two other companies were sent to carry ammunition to them and support them. This small force got buried in the crowd, and in attempting to open their way to the palace they were massacred almost to a man. The furious multitude then fell upon the two companies at the palace, and massacred them too, men and officers. The English officers died with their swords in their hands; a heap of the assailants were slain, and only a very few of the sepoys escaped. During the confusion the rajah ran out by a wicket-gate which opened on the steep bank of the Ganges, and, letting himself down to the river-brink by a string formed of turbans tied together, he threw himself into a boat and escaped to the opposite bank, whither he was soon followed by the multitude.

If, instead of flying, the rajah and his people had fallen upon Hastings, the consequences could scarcely have been doubtful, for at the moment the governor-general had only fifty regular and armed sepoys at hand for the defence of his house, in which were assembled a number of civilians without arms.* But even after

* Hastings says himself, "If Cheyte Sing's

the first fury of the populace was spent, and the rajah had shown that he was not inclined to risk bold measures, the situation of Hastings and his small party remained very critical. They were blockaded on all sides, they had hardly any money with them, and they had not provisions even for a single day. If the governor-general had been at fault in risking such a storm with such frail resources, he certainly showed no want of courage in bearing the brunt, and his decision and promptness never forsook him. The rajah sent to offer apologies for what had happened, to protest that he was innocent of the tumult, and to declare that he was ready to submit to any conditions. Hastings did not deign to answer these messages. In the course of the day he collected about 400 sepoys in Benares; and he sent orders to another small body of sepoys that were cantoned at Mirzapoor, on the other side of the Ganges, to march against the palace of Ramnagur, just opposite to Benares, in which Cheyte Sing had taken up his temporary abode. In order that his emissaries might get through the blockade without losing their despatches, he wrote in the smallest hand on small slips of paper, which were rolled up and put into the ears of his messengers.* In this manner he wrote to the British officers commanding in the nearest cantonments; he wrote to his wife at Monghir, to assure her that he was safe; he wrote to the chief justice to request his advice and assistance; and he even wrote a letter of instructions to the envoy who was negotiating with the Mahrattas. In the afternoon, the officer in command of the sepoys that had rapidly advanced from Mirzapoor, imprudently attempting to carry the palace of Ramnagur, which was fortified, without the aid of artillery, got engaged in the narrow streets leading to it, and was repulsed with considerable loss—a loss including that of his own life. This incident gave fresh courage to the multitude, and induced Hastings to think of a retreat. Under cover of night he fled from Benares, and, with singular good fortune, he reached in safety the strong fortress of Chunar, built on a rock that rises several hundred feet above the Ganges, and is situated about seventeen miles below Benares. On the following morning the reported flight of the governor-general gave still further encouragement to the insurgents. The whole of the district rose in arms; and people began to flock in from the adjoining territories of Oude and Bahar, vowing that they would protect the rajah and his holy city.

The numbers and the spirit of the Hindus who thus surrounded him animated for a moment the weak and timid soul of Cheyte Sing; and, after making more humble applications by messengers and by letters to Hastings, who continued to refuse any answer, he put himself at the head of the insurgents, appealed by a sort of manifesto to the neighbouring princes, and, it is said, even spoke of driving the English out of the country. Notwithstanding his ingenious precautions, several of Hastings's letters miscarried; but others reached their destinations, and were obeyed with that rapidity which the exigencies of the case required. Money was sent to him from Lucknow, the capital of Oude, and troops, quitting their various cantonments, concentrated under the rock of Chunar. At this crisis everything depended on the fidelity of the sepoys, for there were hardly any troops in the country but natives; and the sepoys were, for the most part, men of the same tribe and country as those against whom they were to act, were many of them natives of Benares and the surrounding district,

people, after they had effected his rescue, had proceeded to my quarters, instead of crowding after him in a tumultuous manner, as they did, in his passage over the river, it is probable that my blood, and that of about thirty English gentlemen of my party, would have been added to the recent carnage."—*Narrative.*

* When the Indians travel they lay aside their enormous gold earrings, and put quills into the orifices to prevent their closing up. These quills were not always inserted in the ears; they were sometimes carried in the mouths of the hircars. Some of those which were sent to the chief justice are still preserved as relics by one of Sir Elijah Impey's daughters.

Hastings always acknowledged that he owed his escape chiefly to the prompt measures taken by Sir Elijah Impey, and Sir Elijah, alluding to these occurrences, was in the habit of quoting "Quod Thebæ cecidere meum est, &c."

and as such had been wont to consider Cheyte Sing as their legitimate prince. It is perhaps only in India that the natural sympathies and passions of men have ever been so subjugated by discipline and other artificial means. But the event proved that Hastings was right in relying on their unalterable fidelity to their standard or their salt, and on their attachment to the military point of honour as greater than any they bore for their country or kindred, their native prince, or even their religion. Not a corps showed any reluctance to engage the rajah and the people of Benares, not a single case of desertion occurred; and the insurrection, which might speedily have become a far-reaching revolution, was put down by these sepoys. On the 29th of August a considerable body of Cheyte Sing's people, who had advanced to a small fort not far from Chunar, were routed and compelled to leave all their rice and baggage behind them; on the 3rd of September a still larger body were defeated with the loss of their artillery; on the 15th other corps were put to flight; and on the 20th the pass of Sukroot and the large and fortified town of Pateeta were forced, cleared, and taken by the sepoys commanded by Major Popham. The hardy insurgents had fought bravely in some of these affairs; but they were without discipline, and poor Cheyte Sing was no hero—his courage or confidence vanished at the first roar of his enemies' guns.* In a few hours nothing could be seen of his army, which had been estimated at 30,000 men; "and in a few hours," adds the governor-general, speaking as a king or the servant of kings, "the allegiance of the country was restored as completely from a state of universal revolt, to its proper channel, as if it had never departed from it." The rajah, with his family and a few attendants, fled precipitately to Bidjeeghur, the principal stronghold of the Benares princes, and about fifty miles from the capital. To that capital the governor-general returned triumphantly, issuing a proclamation, and an amnesty for all except Cheyte Sing and his brother. No time was lost in sending troops to Bidjeeghur. The poor rajah had not courage to await their arrival: he fled in the night to find refuge, and an exile from which he never returned, among the rajahs of Bondilcund. In his haste, in his anxiety for his own safety by means of a flight too rough and rapid for ladies, he left behind him his wife, his mother, and all the females of his family, who were taken prisoners in the fort, which surrendered by capitulation on the 9th of November. According to Hastings, the rajah had carried off with him an immense sum of money, besides jewels; but current rupees to the amount of about 250,000*l.* sterling were found in the old castle of Bidjeeghur. Even this sum, which was not an eighth of the booty the governor-general expected to obtain from the expulsion of the rajah, never reached the public treasury, being appropriated by the troops, who for some five months had received little or no pay. "Judge of my astonishment," says Hastings, "when I tell you that the distribution of the plunder was begun before I knew that the place was in possession, and finished before I knew that it was begun!"* When the prin-

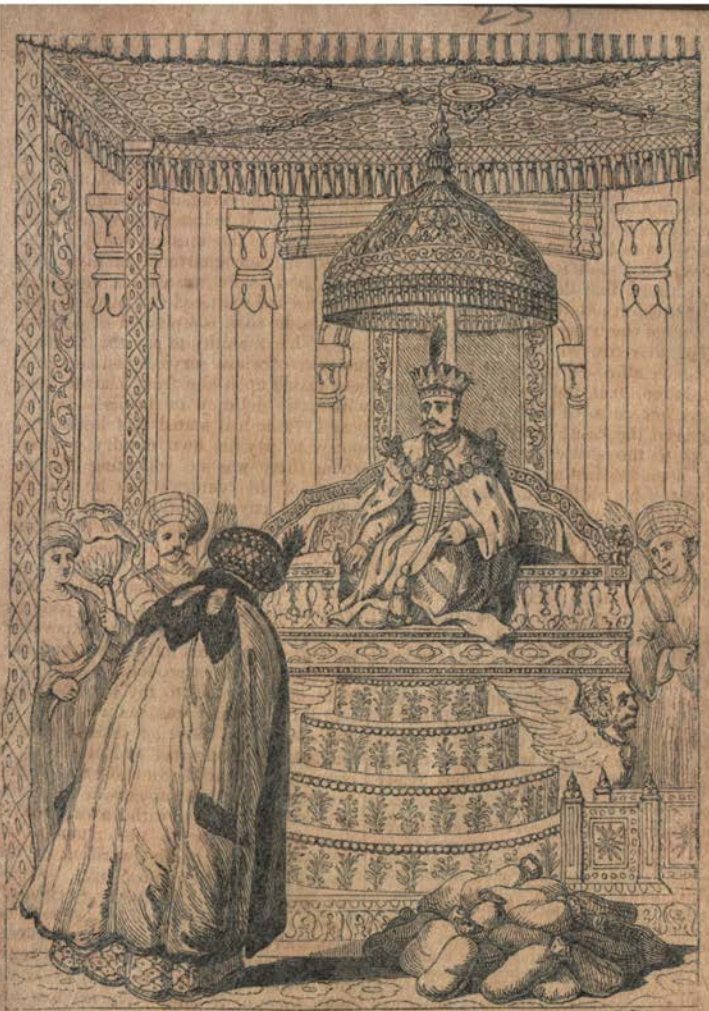
* It was not however at Sukroot or Pateeta that the insurgents fought bravely. We have in our hands a note written in pencil by Major Popham on the 20th of September, immediately after the affair. The major tells the governor-general that two or three rounds fired from a single cannon put them all to flight; that very few of his sepoys had been killed, and not an officer hurt; that the enemy sustained great loss in their flight, &c.

* Hastings has been charged with deceiving the troops, or with leading them to believe, before the place was taken, that the plunder was to be divided among them, and of attempting to retract and get the money for the public service when the place was in possession. The select committee of the House of Commons went into the matter, and one or two notes written by the governor-general to Major Popham, the commander of the force, were read. But one of these notes had no date, and neither of them was very clear or decisive as to the point in debate. Hastings himself, in another letter written to his friend and present agent in England, Major Scott, on the 21st of February, 1782, or rather more than three months after the event, expressed his astonishment at the rapacity of the officers, and said that he had not the shadow of a suspicion that Major Popham would have taken any decided step in a matter of such concern without an express authority from him, especially as he was so near the spot. He added —"A very uncandid advantage was taken of a private letter written by me to Major Popham

cesses with their relations and attendants came out of the old castle—three hundred women in all, besides children — they were rudely subjected to search by the soldiery, notwithstanding the terms of the capitulation, which expressly provided against such an indignity. The soldiers wanted no such warning; but Hastings, in a note to the commanding officer, hinted that the old Ranee might contrive to defraud them of a considerable part of the booty if the women were suffered to retire without examination. The Ranee affirmed, before and after the capitulation, that the money was hers and not her son's. This is very likely to have been the case; but it made no difference to the soldiers, and would have made none to Hastings, who wanted all the money he could get. In the mean while, the governor-general, still considering a puppet rajah indispensable at Benares, had selected a nephew of Cheyte Sing to fill that part, raising at the same time the tribute to forty lacs of rupees, and taking the entire jurisdiction and management of the city and country into his own hands. Even the mint, the last vestige of sovereignty, was taken from this boy rajah and placed under the control of the Company's resident at Benares.

By this revolution an addition of about 200,000*l.* per annum was made to the revenues of the Company; but ready money there was none, and this must be procured somewhere. The governor-general, therefore, determined to apply the screw to Asoff-ul-Dowla, nabob of Oude and master of Rohilcund, and one of the most extravagant, debauched, and contemptible of Indian princes. He had been kept on the musnud solely by the British brigade quartered in his dominions, but, as he wasted his money in pleasures and scattered it among his favourites, he soon complained of poverty and of his inability to pay the brigade, the price of whose services had certainly been raised upon him from year to year with little delicacy or justice. In the year 1779 he had stated that he had no money to pay his own cavalry, without whom there was no collecting the revenues of the country; that he had no money to pay his father's debts, or to support the harem and children his father had left behind him; no money to pay his own servants or keep up his own court. Hastings admitted that it was possible the nabob might be as poor as he stated; but he insisted that his poverty was the effect of his folly, vices, and extravagance, and not produced by the payment of a few lacs to the brigade. He told him — what was notorious to all India—that he could not defend himself against the Mahrattas and Rohillas, or even against the discontents and insurrections of his own subjects, if the Company's troops were withdrawn; and he gave him clearly to understand that, whatever might be the wording of the treaty, the brigade, and a large body of cavalry called a "temporary brigade," which had been superadded, should be kept there as long as the Company chose, and that as long as it was there he must find means to pay it. But pay he could not; though, if sundry stories that are told be true, the rapacious officers in command of the brigade frequently got large sums from him for their own private use, making a constant harvest of his unmanly fears; his other expenses continued and were augmented by a new taste for erecting gorgeous and most costly buildings; the cultivators of the soil, overburdened with taxes, began to run away or to neglect their labours; his

on another occasion during the heat of the siege, at which time I made it a point to answer all his letters on the instant of their receipt, and generally by another hand, and often in the most familiar style. The fact is, that, instead of receiving my letters as authority, they were afraid that I should stop or qualify the distribution, and therefore precipitated it to prevent me. I referred the matter to the board, but they chose to wait my return; and we have since publicly called upon the sharers to refund, and submit their pretensions wholly to our decision. If they refuse, I shall propose to try whether the law may not compel them. Popham's fault in the business was a want of resolution, and he has avowed that he could not withstand the universal clamour and vehemence of his officers for the scramble. The officers sent a very elegant sword as a present to me, and a set of dressing-boxes for Mrs. Hastings, all beautifully inlaid with jewels: I returned them all."—*Letter to Major Scott, as given by Gleig.* It appears that the refunding was found impossible—that the officers and soldiers kept what they had got.



Naboh of Oude.—From a Painting by Horne.

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arrears accumulated, and before Hastings went to Benares the nabob stood charged in the Company's books with a debt amounting to nearly one million and a half sterling. Indeed one of the objects of the governor-general's journey up the country was to obtain some settlement of this account—though we are not so credulous as to believe that he would not have put the pressure upon the nabob even if there had not been any such account in existence. He knew that, though the nabob might have an empty treasury, there were others in Oude who had abundance of money hoarded up and concealed in the Oriental manner; and after this he was hunting with the keenness of a lurcher and the pertinacity of a bulldog.

Asoff-ul-Dowla was journeying between Lucknow and Benares, to meet the governor-general with all due honour and respect, when he heard accounts of the insurrection which had been provoked by the arrest of Cheyte Sing. He did not, however, retrace his steps, as might have been expected, but continued his journey to the fortress of Chunar, in which the governor-general had taken refuge. On that elevated spot, while 30,000 bold men of Benares were gathering on the Ganges within view of the fort, Hastings coolly bargained with the nabob. He began with gratifications, concessions, and seeming sacrifices; but great were the concessions and sacrifices he expected in return. He agreed that the nabob had been charged too much for the brigade, and had been squeezed most mercilessly by English officers—"as well as other gentlemen" who had quartered themselves upon his treasury; he even agreed that the territories of Oude and Rohilcund might be defended with a much smaller force, and that all the Company's troops should be withdrawn except the single brigade, and a regiment of sepoys for Mr. Middleton the resident's guard. In return for this liberality Asoff-ul-Dowla was to rob his own mother and grandmother, and to give the produce of the robbery to Hastings in discharge of his debts and obligations to the Company. The two Begums, one the mother of the late nabob, Sujah Dowla, the other his wife, and the parent of the reigning nabob, were the possessors of the hoards and hidden treasures which Hastings had been led to consider as vast enough to achieve the salvation of the British empire in India. At the death of Sujah Dowla a considerable part of the treasure which happened to be in his hands at the time was certainly left to these two ladies, and secured by them; and the dying nabob had further marked his affection to his mother and the most beloved of his wives by bequeathing them certain jaghires. The two ladies had continued to live with great state and magnificence; but Asoff-ul-Dowla, finding his own large revenues insufficient to supply his expenditure, soon envied them the possession of the treasure and the annual proceeds of their jaghires, and, long before his interview with Hastings on the rock of Chunar, he had wrung and extorted money from them. As early as the year 1775 the grandmother and mother of the unduteous Asoff-ul-Dowla had written pathetic letters to the government at Calcutta, complaining of the harsh treatment they received, and imploring to be taken under the protection of the Company, which alone was strong enough to protect any one in Oude. The nabob's mother had stated in one of these letters that he had actually extorted from her twenty-six lacs of rupees, and was then endeavouring to force from her thirty lacs more—thirty lacs down, in hard cash and in one payment. The governor and council, not having at that moment to provide for the defence of the Carnatic, for the defence of Surat and Bombay, for the enormous charges of the war against Hyder Ali and the French, expressed themselves as morally and correctly as a decalogue, quoted the Commandments to Asoff-ul-Dowla, and then, with a virtuous indignation at his conduct, extended the shield of their protection to the two old ladies. At the nabob's request a solemn agreement was drawn up, concluded, and guaranteed by the Company, by which the Bhow Begum gave to her son the thirty lacs of rupees, and her son engaged that no further invasion, or attempts at invasion, should be made on the treasure

or on the jaghires. But the nabob could not keep his hands from picking and stealing; fresh attempts were made on the purses of the two old ladies, who held their money with a truly Eastern tenacity of grasp, and kept complaining to the English as the framers and guarantees of this broken family compact. In the year 1778 the grandmother Begum, whose residence had been rendered irksome and disgusting to her by her grandson, resolved to quit his dominions and go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The nabob, dreading that the old lady might carry some of the treasure with her, refused to permit her departure. The Begum then applied to Mr. Middleton, the resident at Lucknow, whose time was almost absorbed by these constant squabbles. The Begum, who was more anxious for peace and quietness, and the possession of her money at home, than for the spiritual pleasures and advantages of the pilgrimage to the tomb of the prophet, represented that she was deprived of her jaghires, that her servants and tenants were plundered, and herself insulted by the vile favourites of the nabob: and that the women and children—a very numerous brood—of the late nabob, including Asoff-ul-Dowla's own brothers and sisters, were all left in a degrading state of destitution. At the same time the younger Begum raised fresh complaints against her unloving son; and Middleton, by his reports to the council at Calcutta, seemed to verify the charges. On the 23rd of March (1778) the council—that is to say, Hastings, Barwell, Francis, and Wheler—wrote in the strongest terms to Middleton, commanding him to take immediate steps for preventing these acts of violence and robbery. He was to represent to the nabob that the *honour* and *reputation* of the Company were committed by his cruelty and injustice. In what related to the grandmother and her affairs he was only to remonstrate;—"but," subjoined these moralists, "with respect to the mother of the nabob, her grievances come before us on a very different footing. She is entitled to our protection by an act not sought by us, but solicited by the nabob himself. We therefore empower and direct you to afford your support and protection to her in the due maintenance of all the rights she possesses." *

Now that it was determined to tear up the family treaty, and utterly despoil both the ladies of all their money and all their jaghires, it was thought expedient to devise some means of colouring over the transaction, so as to save the *honour* and *reputation* of the governor and council. Hastings's only excuse—allowing any excuse to be admissible—would have been contained in a simple fact, which might have been announced in words like these:—"India must be saved; it cannot be saved without more money; and were the Begums my own mother and grandmother, I would have their treasure!"—But this enunciation would have been too bold; and, daring as he was in action, the governor-general had a natural turn for subterfuges, and an earnest anxiety on all occasions to make his black look white, and to pay homage not merely to public opinion in its higher sense, but to the conventionalities and established proprieties of society. Hence, therefore, he pretended that the two poor old women were dangerous rebels and traitors to the sovereign Company, and that great doubts might be entertained as to the validity of Sujah Dowla's testamentary bequests. It was said that the will, under which they claimed, had never been produced; and it was pretended also that the deceased nabob could not lawfully alienate the treasure and territory of the state, which of right belonged to his successor. But Indian princes had at all times made similar dispositions of money and lands; and the government of Calcutta had solemnly recognised the rights, at least, of Sujah Dowla's widow, without any question or doubt or reservation as to a will or any other document. The rebellion and treason were still more groundless charges. Hastings's accusations were, that the Begums by money and other means had excited and encouraged the disturbances in Oude, which had followed the insurrection at Benares. Now, the

* Parliamentary Reports; Minutes of Evidence taken at Hastings's trial.

two old ladies were much too fond of money to part with it on any account; and, as to other means, in the seclusion in which they lived they had none. Whatever good cause Hastings now gave them to think otherwise, they had, up to this point, regarded the English as their best and only protectors, with whose power and authority their own fortunes were inseparably linked; and if they could have been capable of making any sacrifices or exertions, it would assuredly have been in a direction altogether opposite to that in which they were charged with acting. Hastings, indeed, pretended that the insurrection at Benares was a planned thing, and that the rajah had been for some time preparing for a struggle with the Company; but every circumstance tends to show that the insurrection was a sudden and spontaneous movement, provoked by the daring novelty of putting the nabob under arrest in his own palace. If there had been any preconcerted scheme, nothing could have contributed more to its success, or have been more easy of execution, than the cutting off of the governor-general, or the making him a prisoner, which might have been done by a little stratagem and very little force, either on his journey between Buxar and Benares, or in the latter city the night after his arrival. If the insurrection was, as we firmly believe, wholly unpremeditated and unforeseen, there was not time between its breaking out and the first tumultuary movement in Oude for the Begums to do anything, as those two ladies were shut up in the palace of Fyzabad, which is about 115 miles in a straight line from Benares, and a great deal farther by travelling distance. Nor had the Begums time to do much between the tumult at Benares and the arrival of their grandson and son at Chunar and the conclusion of the treaty of spoliation. The insurrection happened on the 16th of August, the treaty was signed on the 19th of September. The people of Oude that lived in the immediate neighbourhood of Benares were excited against the English by the violence offered to Cheyte Sing; but whatever disturbances had happened in the interior of Oude had arisen not out of any malice or any project against the company, but out of a detestation of the nabob; and the English resident himself had represented to the governor-general and council, many months before—nay, more than three years and a half before the present troubles—that revolt and insurrection were inevitable in Oude, and that the filthy vices of the nabob and the violence and injustice of his execrable favourites would drive every man of any property or reputation out of the country.* Hastings, however, chose now to consider that any attack on Asoff-ul-Dowla amounted to the same thing as a direct attack upon the Company; and, it was no doubt easy to prove that there had been at least some rioting in the country before Hastings came to Benares. In the examinations which were held at Lucknow, and in the depositions which were there delivered in writing (as well by British officers as by natives), it was demonstrated in the clearest manner that many thousands of people, besides his own immediate subjects, had taken up arms for Cheyte Sing, had attacked parties of British sepoys, and had marched against the governor-general; but it was not proved that these people had not been provoked wholly and solely by the governor-general's harsh treatment of the rajah, or that, if Hastings had not come to Benares to extort money, there would not have been any insurrection against his authority.

The two ladies at Fyzabad were neither present at the examinations nor represented by any vakeel or agent; they knew nothing of what was going on until judgment was passed, and that judgment was even carried into execution without their ever having been informed of the charges against them!† The decision was,

* Mr. Middleton, Letter dated Fyzabad, 3rd of February, 1778.

† Hastings, however, maintained (and Englishmen as well as natives swore to the facts), that the Begums or their agents were privy to the rajah's plans, and sent Cheyte Sing assistance as soon as he began to collect an army to wage war upon the English. In a letter to Sulivan, the governor-general says:—"On the revolt of Cheyte Sing, she (the Bhow Begum) and the old Begum, Sujah Dowla's mother, raised troops; caused levies to be made for Cheyte Sing, excited all the zemindars of Garookpoor and

that the treaty or family agreement, solemnly guaranteed by the governor and council, should be thrown to the winds; that the nabob should be allowed to seize and appropriate the Begum's jaghires for his own use, and to seize the treasure for the use of the Company, who were to take it in liquidation of the debt he owed them or was said to owe them. Even the heart of Asoff-ul-Dowla misgave him when he returned to Lucknow to carry this judgment into execution. Perhaps he felt some natural compunction, some return of tenderness for the mother that had borne him; perhaps he only feared the effect that might be produced on the minds of his people by such atrocious acts; but what is certain is, that he hesitated and hung back from the execution of the treaty of Chunar. Even Mr. Middleton, the chosen agent of Hastings, the man who had managed the arresting or inveigling of Mohammed Reza Khan and Shitab Roy, the active and ready instrument of the governor-general on all occasions, seems to have shrunk from the odious work. But Hastings wrote both to nabob and agent to tell them of his impatience and to urge them on, and Middleton was ordered to do the work himself if Asoff-ul-Dowla would not. Hereupon the nabob, to save his authority, proceeded to take possession of the jaghires which were to be *his* (at least after some payments to the Company, if the money of his mother and grandmother should not prove enough); but a fresh wavering and hesitation came over him when he was urged or commanded to seize the treasure which was to be the *Company's*. It appears that Hastings threatened to go on to Fyzabad and perform the part of spoliator himself. But at last the nabob and the resident, with a body of English sepoys, set out from Lucknow for the dwelling of the Begums at Fyzabad, or the "Beautiful Residence," pleasantly situated among streams, and woods, and hills, about eighty miles to the east of Lucknow. Several days were spent in negotiations with the Begums, who, as tenacious of their money as ever, would accede to no terms, though they could make no resistance. Orders were then given to storm that quiet town and the defenceless palace. Little or no opposition was made: the sepoys took possession of the palace, the shrieking women shut themselves up in the innermost apartment, but the treasure was not to be found, nor would any one give information of the place or places where it was hidden. But the nabob was familiar with the detestable practices of the East—with the processes usually, and in most instances successfully, adopted by Hyder Ali in discovering money secrets,—and the mind of Mr. Middleton, Englishman, and English gentleman, as he claimed to be, does not appear to have shrunk from their adoption.

There were two old eunuchs in the palace, Jewar Ali Khan and Behar Ali Khan, who had been the favourites and most confidential servants of Sujah Dowla, and who, ever since that nabob's death, had continued in the service of his widow, the Bhow Begum. There could be no doubt that these two unhappy beings knew where the money lay, or, if they did not, it was thought probable that their sufferings would work upon the Begums' hearts and extract the key: and therefore it was determined to throw them into a dungeon, to load them with irons, to starve them, to torture them, as the best means of getting at the rupees, directly or indirectly: and, at this stage, Hastings's agent and friend was more than acquiescent in the damnable atrocity; for the officer in command of the sepoy guard placed over the two old men received his orders from Middleton. The sufferings of the old men, or their own sufferings and alarms, for they, too, were close prisoners, overcame the passion of avarice in the Begums, and a large sum of money was handed over to the English agent. But this sum fell far short of the amount of the nabob's debt to the Company, and still farther short of the supposed amount

Bareich to rebellion, cut off many parties of sepoys, and the principal Aumil and a favourite of the younger Begum openly opposed and attacked Captain Gordon, one of our officers stationed in his neighbourhood. Let this be an answer to the men of virtue who may exclaim against our breach of faith and the inhumanity of declaring war against widows, princesses of high birth, and defenceless old women. These old women had very nigh effected our destruction."

of the treasure. The elder Begum solemnly protested that she had no more money, that she had nothing left except some goods; but Middleton would not believe her, and he left the two eunuchs in their horrible captivity, and the Begums themselves such close prisoners, and so straitened in their supplies that they, with their numerous female attendants, were half-starved. Eight days after the first storming of the palace Middleton wrote to the officer commanding the sepoys: "Sir, when this note is delivered to you, I have to desire that you order the two prisoners to be put in irons, keeping them from all food, &c., agreeable to my instructions of yesterday." It seems scarcely possible to credit that such a note could be written by any Englishman at the end of the eighteenth century. A more infernal document never proceeded from King John, or the worst of his agents, when it was the fashion to torture Jews in England for the same purpose, and when the nation had hardly begun to emerge from barbarity. Middleton's cool "&c.," which might include every horror that man can inflict or endure, seems to us the maximum—the very essence of the atrocious! Under fresh sufferings the two eunuchs undertook, by a written engagement, to furnish some more money on their own credit or out of their own effects in the course of one month. Middleton took their engagement, but kept them in their dungeon all the same. The avarice of the Begums relented again, and they produced more money, and then more, until upwards of 500,000*l.* sterling were received by Middleton, who then began to doubt whether they really had any more. The last payment was made in clearance of the *engagement* or bond which had been extorted from the eunuchs, but it fell short of the total amount of that bond by several thousand pounds. It was therefore resolved to continue the imprisonment, the starving, and the torture of those two beings, who, like their mistresses, vowed that there was no more money—that not a single rupee more could possibly be procured unless they were restored to their liberty, and allowed to go forth among friends and bankers to raise money upon credit. But Middleton and Hastings, and their active agents in these money-extorting processes, thought that suffering and agony might quicken the old men's memories and lead to the discovery of some other hiding-places, and they were ordered to be kept where they were, and as they were, with their emaciated bodies loaded with chains. When months had passed, the officer in command of the sepoy guard wrote to Middleton at Lucknow, to inform him that the two prisoners, Behar Ali Khan and Jewar Ali Khan, who seemed to be "very sickly," implored that their irons might be taken off for a few days, and that they might be allowed to take a little air in the garden. "Now," said the officer, "as I am sure that they will be equally secure without their irons as with them, I think it my duty to inform you of this request. I desire to know your pleasure concerning it." The resident's pleasure was that the prayer should be refused, and that no alleviation of misery should be allowed. And a few days after this the two eunuchs were informed that, unless they produced more money, they would be brought in their chains over to Lucknow, there to be subjected to a still harder fate, and made to answer for other crimes. These threats terrified the old men out of their senses, and seemed to make a deep impression on the Begums, who did not, however, come forward with any more money. The captives were therefore carried to Lucknow, the capital of Oude. There they were kept in an English prison, or, at least, their gaolers and guards were English officers and sepoys in the Company's service. But, out of deference to the superior skill of the nabob's people in the art of torturing, or out of some lingering remains of English feeling, or out of a paltry notion of cheating the fiend with a "Thou canst not say I did it," Middleton and his gang now left the more active part of the business to the *officers* or torturers of Asoff-ul-Dowla. The assistant resident wrote to the English officer a note perhaps more atrocious than that which Middleton had written at Fyzabad. Like that note it was horribly brief. It was to this effect: "Sir, the nabob having determined to inflict corporeal punishment upon the

prisoners under your guard, this is to desire that his officers, when they shall come, may have free access to the prisoners, and be permitted to do with them as they shall see proper."

While these things were doing at Lucknow, the imprisonment of the Begums and the semi-starvation of their household were continued at Fyzabad. At last, however, when the horrible proceedings had lasted altogether more than a year, and when Hastings had procured, in specie, in jewels, in bills, in household goods—for nothing was spared—not even the table utensils of the Begums—a sum considerably exceeding a million sterling, orders were sent from Calcutta, through the resident at Lucknow, to cease the persecution of the two old women in the "Beautiful Residence," and to liberate the two old eunuchs, who had been restored to their original dungeon at Fyzabad. The governor-general and the resident hoped that they had so managed the whole transaction that the cruelty and the rigour, or the greater part of it, would fall to the share of the nabob, and the mildness and the mercy to themselves. The resident declared to the Begums that it was none but the governor-general that had restored them "to their dignity and consequence;"* and the two broken-hearted old men were told that they owed their life and liberty to the resident at Lucknow and the great man at Calcutta. The English officer commanding the sepoy guard at the time of the liberation—apparently a silly man, but not bad-hearted—was taught the same lesson. In describing to the resident the enlargement of the two eunuchs, and the joy of the Begums, and of the city of Fyzabad in general, this officer said—"In tears of joy, Behar, and Jewar Ali Khan expressed their sincere acknowledgments to the governor-general, his excellency the nabob-vizier, and to you, sir, for restoring them to that invaluable blessing, liberty; for which they would ever retain the most grateful remembrance; and at their request I transmit you the enclosed letters. I wish you had been present at the enlargement of the prisoners. The quivering lips with the tears of joy stealing down the poor men's cheeks, was a scene truly affecting. If the prayers of these poor men will avail, you will at the last trump be translated to the happiest regions in heaven." We are not informed how the resident looked, or how Hastings felt, at the perusal of this letter, and the reference to the day of judgment, when all secrets would be revealed, and when no juggle or mystery would avail them.*

As all the money extorted—wrung, at last, from the Begums and their servants, drop by drop, like blood from their hearts—was not enough for the wants of the Company, for the support of the ruinous war in the Carnatic, for the operations on the side of Bombay, and for subsidies or presents to keep the Mahrattas quiet, and as the sums collectively did not cover the debt claimed from the Nabob of Onde, the revenues of the jaghires which had been taken from the Begums were claimed and appropriated by the governor-general. During the conferences at Chunar the nabob offered and Hastings accepted a present of 100,000*l.* This, on the part of the governor-general, was altogether illegal, for, though there had been no such laws at the time of Clive's dealings with Meer Jaffier, there now existed the most positive prohibitions against the Company's servants receiving any such presents. Hastings and his friends appear, at first, to have maintained that he only accepted the present in order to have something more to apply to the public service. But, as the nabob had no ready money, he drew bills upon one of the great Indian bankers, and these bills could not be negotiated without giving publicity to what was in itself an illegal act. A good many months after, Hastings revealed the transaction to the court of directors; but as it has been observed—"as

* The resident at this moment was not Middleton, but Bristow, the former nominee of Francis, Clavering, and Monson, who had been reinstated at Lucknow by the positive commands of the court of directors. It does not appear, however, that Bristow was a whit more scrupulous or merciful than Middleton, whom Hastings, in more than one letter, treats as a milksop, deficient in energy, too much moved by old women's tears, &c. &c.

* All the astounding facts here related were in evidence on Hastings's trial.

the intention of concealing the transaction should not be imputed to Mr. Hastings, unless as far as evidence appears, so in this case the disclosure cannot be imputed to him as virtue, since no prudent man would have risked the chance of discovery which the publicity of a banker's transactions implied."* Hastings, moreover, in this letter to the directors, begged to be permitted to keep the money as a reward for his late important services. He had hitherto saved little, and the 100,000*l.* would not have been a bad contribution to a fortune to retire upon.

In the same conferences at Chunar, the affairs of Fyzoola Khan, the last of the great Rohilla chiefs that remained in Rohilcund, came under discussion. By the treaty between this chief and the Nabob of Oude, which the Company had guaranteed, Fyzoola Khan was to be allowed quiet possession of a certain territory near the Rohilcund frontier, with a revenue estimated at 15 lacs per annum, he being bound, besides other sacrifices, to cease all connection or intercourse with the other Rohilla chiefs. Complaints, true or false, had been raised by the court of Oude, that Fyzoola Khan disregarded his engagements, and was making himself strong and dangerous in Rohilcund. Yet at the breaking out of the war with France, Fyzoola, as bound by his treaty, sent some troops to join the Nabob of Oude, the ally of the English, and promised to send more. Hastings and the council hereupon recommended the Nabob of Oude to make an instant demand for 5000 Rohilla *horse*, "as the quota stipulated by the treaty." But the treaty stipulated no such thing—what it stipulated was, that Fyzoola Khan should never retain in his service more than 5000 men, and that, whenever the nabob-vizier wanted them, he should send 2000 or 3000 of his *troops* to join him—the word in the treaty was *troops*, not *horse*. Fyzoola Khan represented these things to the nabob, assuring him that all the cavalry he had did not exceed 2000. The nabob reported the Khan's answer to Hastings, who, after some curious quibbling about the meaning of the treaty, ordered that a deputation, consisting partly of officers from the Nabob of Oude and partly of English officers to represent the Company as guarantees of the treaty, should immediately wait upon Fyzoola Khan, to demand on the instant 3000 *horse*, and, in case of any refusal or evasion, to declare the treaty broken and the guarantee of the Company void. The khan again quoted the document, which said *troops*, not *horse*, and which stipulated that the number of his contingent was to be 3000, or only 2000, according to his ability; but after making these representations he offered to furnish 2000 horse and 1000 foot if a little time were allowed him, to pay down in advance money enough to satisfy these troops for a whole year, and to be regular and punctual in his future payments. But the deputation would not accede to propositions which far exceeded what the Rohilla chief was bound to, and they, in obedience to their orders, made the declaration and protest which left the treaty a piece of waste paper. The meaning of all this was that Asoff-ul-Dowla was hankering after the remnant of Rohilcund, and that Hastings was determined to gratify him. Except the protest, nothing, however, was done till Asoff-ul-Dowla and Hastings met face to face on the rock of Chunar, and the nabob consented to the conditions which have been described. Then, in the treaty there made, the governor-general inserted and signed an article affirming that, as Fyzoola Khan had, by breach of treaty, forfeited the protection of the English government, and was causing "by his present independent state, great alarm and detriment to the nabob-vizier," he the said nabob should be permitted, "when time should suit," to resume possession of his territory. This clause, however, was scarcely signed ere Hastings informed the council at Calcutta that it was to be looked upon as a mere sham to gratify the Nabob of Oude for the present; that no active measures for dispossession were to be allowed, as he was of opinion that neither the real interests of Oude nor the interests of the Company would be promoted by despoiling Fyzoola Khan, or depriving him of his independence. "And I have therefore," said he, "reserved the execution of

* Mill.

this agreement to any indefinite term; *and our government may always interpose to prevent any ill effects from it.*" Asoff-ul-Dowla's impatience, however, was not to be controlled; and when the Company had got the money of the Begums, and nearly all the advantages for which Hastings had stipulated in the Chunar treaty, he became clamorous for permission to drive out the last of the Rohillas. At the time of the first Rohilla war that turbulent and martial people were, no doubt, dangerous to Oude and to the territories of the Company, but this could scarcely be the case at present, when the far greater part of them were dispossessed and scattered over Upper India, unless the danger consisted in their presenting an opening across the frontier, and into the heart of Oude, to some fresh invaders—some confederacy of Rohillas and other kindred tribes in the north of India, whose faces were generally turned towards the rich south. It does not appear, however, that this cause of alarm was set forth, or that there was any proof or even appearance of Fyzoola Khan's entertaining any views beyond the quiet possession of the territory ceded to him. In a short time Hastings induced the nabob to agree that it would be proper and advantageous to give up the notion of invasion and dispossession for another payment in hard cash; and an English officer was dispatched to ask fifteen lacs of rupees from the Khan, who for this sum was to be secured anew in his jaghire, and that jaghire to be made perpetual and hereditary in his family. The money was to be paid into the hands of the Company, who were to keep it in part liquidation of the Nabob of Oude's inextinguishable debt. But Fyzoola Khan protested that he had not fifteen lacs—that there was not so much money in all his country;—and the bargain could not be concluded. As there was no money to be procured, Hastings, who afterwards confessed that his conduct towards the Rohilla chief had been blameable, put his interdict on any hostile proceedings by the Nabob of Oude; and Fyzoola Khan kept possession of his territory till his death, which happened thirteen years after, and when he had attained a patriarchal age. This able chief, favoured by political circumstances which he neither made nor controlled, but which were of inestimable benefit to him as tending to keep him and the country around him comparatively undisturbed, left his little dominion in a high state of cultivation and prosperity. The thriving and peaceful aspect which this corner of Rohilcund presented at the end of the year 1794 seems to be incorrectly assumed by some writers as true of the whole of the country at the time of the first Rohilla war in the year 1774.

## CHAPTER XIX

THE surrender of Lord Cornwallis at York Town put an end to the American war, and to the ministry which had so wofully mismanaged it. On the 20th of March, 1782, Lord North resigned, and the formation of the joint Rockingham and Shelburne administration brought Mr. Burke into place, though not into the cabinet. Various changes and reforms were then precipitated, and measures of rigour adopted, which the indolence and good nature of the late premier had shrunk from. Philip Francis, ever since his return from India, had possessed himself of Burke's ear, had filled it with monstrously exaggerated accounts of Hastings's proceedings, had represented Sir Elijah Impey, the chief judge, as the vile instrument of the governor, and had filled the excitable mind of Burke with indignation and horror. The art employed by Francis must have been consummate, for the great orator and statesman never recovered from his delusion, nor looked upon Indian affairs except through the jaundiced organs of Francis. Now, Burke almost entirely directed the nominal premier, the Marquess of Rockingham, and the effects of this ascendency were soon seen in relation to India. On the 3rd of May it was settled that Sir Elijah Impey should be recalled; and the letter of recall was afterwards written and dispatched by Lord Shelburne, Secretary of State.* Some weeks after this, Hastings himself ran a narrow chance of being recalled as a criminal. On the 9th of April (1782) Dundas, as chairman of the secret committee, moved that their reports should be referred to a committee of the whole House; and in the speech which he delivered on this occasion he condemned everything that had been done in India, and held up the conduct of all the three presidencies, of nearly every important func-

* Lord Shelburne's letter of recall was dated the 8th of July. The great driver in this business was Philip Francis, a man whose motives of action seem always to have had a large alloy of personal feelings and animosities. The following story of his Indian life is told by one who was personally acquainted with most of the parties mentioned; and, as far as we know, no important particular in it has ever received contradiction:—"Strong resentment was a leading feature in his (Francis's) character. I have heard him avow this sentiment more openly and more explicitly than I ever heard any other man avow it in the whole course of my life; I have heard him publicly say in the House of Commons, 'Sir Elijah is not fit to sit in judgment on any matter where I am interested, nor am I fit to sit in judgment on him.' A relation of the ground of this ill-will may be amusing. Mrs. le Grand, the wife of a gentleman in the civil service of Bengal, was admired for her beauty, for the sweetness of her temper, and for her fascinating accomplishments. She attracted the attention of Mr. Francis. This gentleman, by means of a rope ladder, got into her apartment in the night. After he had remained there about three-quarters of an hour, there was an alarm, and Mr. Francis came down from the lady's apartment by the rope-ladder, at the foot of which he was seized by Mr. le Grand's servants. An action was brought by Mr. le Grand against Mr. Francis, in the supreme court of Calcutta. The judges in that court assess the damages in civil actions without the intervention of a jury. The gentlemen who at that time filled this situation were Sir Elijah Impey, chief justice, Sir Robert Chambers, and Mr. Justice Hyde. I was intimate with the first and the third from early life, having lived with them on the Western Circuit. *On the trial of this cause, Sir Robert Chambers thought that, as no criminality had been proved, no damages should be given.* But he afterwards proposed to give 30,000 rupees, which are worth about 3000*l.* sterling. Mr. Justice Hyde was for giving 100,000 rupees. I believe that Mr. Justice Hyde was as upright a judge as ever sat on any bench; but he had an implacable hatred to those who indulged in the crime imputed to Mr. Francis. Sir Elijah Impey was of opinion that, although no criminal intercourse had been proved, yet that the wrong done by Mr. Francis to Mr. le Grand in entering his wife's apartment in the night, and thereby destroying her reputation, ought to be compensated with liberal damages. He thought the sum of 30,000 rupees, proposed by Sir Robert Chambers too small, and that proposed by Mr. Hyde, of 100,000, too large. He, therefore, sug-

tionary of the Company, to censure and abhorrence. A bill of pains and penalties was brought in against Sir Thomas Rumbold, late president of Madras, which was read a first time, and afterwards dropped in a manner not very honourable either to the House or to the party accused. On the 30th of May, Dundas, who had grounded his accusations on intelligence then recently received and scarcely authenticated, of the destruction of the Rajah of Benares, moved a resolution to the effect—"That Warren Hastings, Esq., Governor-General of Bengal, having in sundry instances acted in a manner repugnant to the honour and policy of this nation, and thereby brought great calamities on India and enormous expenses on the East India Company, it is the duty of the directors to pursue all legal and effectual means for the removal of the said governor-general, &c., and to recall him to Great Britain." * But this motion was made at a moment when the danger of India was at its height—when, according to the last news that could have been received in England, Hyder Ali and the French were masters of a great part of the Carnatic, and Bussy was expecting great reinforcements from Europe; and, notwithstanding many quarrels or disagreements with him, a majority of the court of directors, and a most decided majority among the holders of India stock, were of opinion that Hastings alone was capable of guiding their interests through this terrible storm, and of profiting by the calm that might follow it. There was, moreover, the instinctive dread of any interference or exercise of direct authority by the crown or by parliament, which were about equally suspected of the design, or at least of a wish, to assume the entire powers of government in India. The measure also lost the efficacious countenance and protection of ministers, or of that part of the ministry where hostility to Hastings and deference to the opinions of Burke were most prominent—for the Marquess of Rockingham died at this critical moment, and though

gested a middle course of 50,000 rupees. This proposal was acquiesced in by his two colleagues. When Sir Elijah Impey was delivering the judgment of the court, my late friend Mr. Justice Hyde could not conceal his eager zeal on the subject; and when Sir Elijah named the sum of 50,000 rupees, Mr. Justice Hyde, to the amusement of the bystanders, called out, 'Siccas, brother Impey,' which are worth eleven per cent. more than the current rupees. Perhaps this story may not be thought worthy of relation; but it gave occasion to that animosity which Mr. Francis publicly avowed against Sir Elijah Impey; and the criminal charge, afterwards brought against him in the House of Commons, was the offspring of that animosity. I will follow up this anecdote by mentioning the consequences of the action brought by Mr. le Grand. The lady was divorced; she was obliged to throw herself under the protection of Mr. Francis for subsistence. After a short time she left him and went to England. In London she fell into the company of M. Talleyrand de Perigord. Captivated by her charms, he prevailed on her to accompany him to Paris, where he married her."—*Recollections and Reflections, Personal and Political, as connected with Public Affairs, during the Reign of George III.; by John Nicholls, Esq., Member of the House of Commons in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and eighteenth Parliaments of Great Britain.*

If the stories told by the Parisians of Madame Talleyrand, Princess of Benevento—whom by the way they call Madame Grant, and not Madame le Grand—be true, the lady's accomplishments were not of a literary kind. Madame le Grand was a native of Pondicherry; Monsieur, her husband, was a Swiss. He lost his fortune, including Francis's sicca rupees; and, at the peace of Amiens, went over to Paris to seek a new one, or to solicit a place under Napoleon's government, through the patronage of his ex-wife and M. de Talleyrand! What followed was a *tour d'adresse* worthy of the great master Talleyrand. He was sent out as governor to Batavia, but *without proper credentials*, and was disclaimed at the seat of government! He resented this treatment by writing a libel on Madame la Princesse, who bought up and destroyed the few copies that were printed. The end of M. le Grand we know not; but for the humanity of Talleyrand it might be very well fancied he ended his days in Finistrelle, or some other fortress, as a state prisoner. It appears that, during his stay in India, Francis lost his own wife by death; and Lord Byron somewhere mentions a letter written by the unloving husband, while her dead body was yet in the house, that struck him with horror.

[Since writing the above, we have found a brief mention of Monsieur le Grand in Sir James Mackintosh's journal of his voyage from India. Sir James met the peripatetic Swiss at the Cape of Good Hope, in January, 1812.—"At the 'African' Club,' where I went to read newspapers and reviews, I met Monsieur Grand, the first husband of Madame Talleyrand; he is rather a gentlemanlike old man, a native of Lausanne, sent here with an office during the peace."—*Journal in Memoirs of the Life of Mackintosh, edited by his Son.*]

* Dundas's resolution included William Hornby, Esq., president of the council of Bombay, who was charged with the same general faults, and who was also to be recalled.

Dundas's resolution had been adopted, no further steps were taken. Indeed, this inactivity would be sufficiently accounted for by the immediate disseverance of the Rockingham and Shelburne parties, by the bitter contentions which ensued between them, and by the all-absorbing subject of the American peace then negotiating. On the other side, the directors and the shareholders friendly to Hastings were uncommonly active and determined. At a great meeting of the proprietors of India stock, held on the 31st of October (1782), it was determined by a large majority that the resolution of the House of Commons should be set at defiance, and that Hastings should not be recalled; and a resolution of their own was adopted, affirming, with perfect truth, that they were intrusted by law with the right of naming and removing their governor-general; and that they were not bound to obey the directions of a single branch of the legislature with respect to such nomination or removal. At the re-assembling of parliament Dundas harangued against these proceedings in Leadenhall-street, as being of a most dangerous tendency, and, in the highest degree, insulting to the authority of the House. But in the middle of this session—on the 5th of April, 1783—the Shelburne ministry, which had been patched up on the death of Lord Rockingham, was shattered and dissolved, after being only nine months in office, by the jealousy and enmity of the Rockinghamites. Then the memorable coalition ministry succeeded to a still shorter tenure of office; and Dundas, who was too cunning to couple his fortunes with it, remained in a high patriotic state of opposition—in a state not likely to win ministerial favour to any scheme of his proposing; and the coalition, unpopular as it was out of doors, commanded an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. Besides, Indian reforms were the peculiar province of Burke.* It must, therefore, have been without any hope of success that Dundas rose on the 14th of April to introduce a bill, providing that the king should have the power of recalling the principal servants of the company, &c.; to repeat his former arguments for the recall of Hastings; and to recommend Lord Cornwallis, who had recently lost his army and capitulated to the Americans and French, as the proper man to be the Governor-General of India. Although Cornwallis had been so unfortunate, he retained the esteem and warm good-will of the king; and, though not a man of brilliant abilities either as a general or as a statesman—we believe that there would have been in India some worse capitulation than that of York Town if his lordship had been in Hastings's place between the years 1779 and 1783—he had many estimable and even high qualities; among which was a disinterestedness or a disregard to money, marvellous in those days. "Here," exclaimed Dundas, alluding to Lord Cornwallis, "here is no broken fortune to be mended, no avarice to be gratified! Here is no beggarly mushroom kindred to be provided for! No crew of hungry followers gaping to be gorged!" Fox's unfortunate East India Bill, which was brought forward on the 11th of November of the same year (1783), and which would have overthrown Hastings if it had been passed, overthrew the coali-

* Major Scott relates some amusing particulars about Lord North at this time. Burke, among other crimes and misdemeanors, had imputed *peculation* to the governor general. "Do you know," said Lord North, speaking to Governor Johnstone, while the major was present, "that Major Scott flew into a violent passion yesterday in his majesty's presence? and what do you think it was for? Why, because Mr. Burke had made use of the word *peculation* in the House. Now you know that *peculation* is a very common word in our House, and strict parliamentary language." The major said that was true enough, and that he had often heard Mr. Burke apply the same word to his lordship. "There was a time, my lord," added Scott, "when Mr. Burke persecuted your lordship with as much inveteracy as he does now Mr. Hastings." "True," replied the easy-minded ex-minister; "they badgered me till they turned me out; and shall I tell you a secret? They will badger Hastings till they rout him out too."—*Letter to Hastings, dated the 18th of July, 1783, as given by Gleig.*

In an earlier letter Scott describes the character of North with some truth. He tells Hastings—"If he had remained in office you would have been supported as vigorously as it was in the nature of Lord North to support any man. His lordship, with wit, knowledge, integrity, and abilities equal to any of his successors, was certainly so indolent as to be the worst minister for the public this country has ever had."—*Id.*

tion ministry. Mr. Pitt then ascended the stage which he was destined to occupy for so long a period; and it was under his first administration that the sceptre of the Governor-General of Bengal was broken. On the 13th of August, 1784, Pitt's Indian Bill was passed into a law. It instituted the Board of Control, by which ever since the government of India may be said to have been directed. It did *not*, like Mr. Fox's bill, claim the nomination of the members of this controlling power for the House of Commons, but left it solely to the crown. It did not abolish the two existing courts of directors and proprietors, as Fox had proposed to do, but it created a *secret* committee, which was to absorb nearly the whole of the diminished power that was left to the directors, and it greatly curtailed the powers of the court of proprietors. It enacted that every individual who had held any office of trust in India should, on his return home, disclose the amount of the fortune he brought with him, and it provided a new tribunal for the trial and punishment of offences liable to be committed in India, or "for the prosecuting and bringing to speedy and condign punishment British subjects guilty of extortion and other misdemeanors, while holding offices in the service of the king or Company in India."* The board of control was to be composed of six commissioners, all members of the privy council, chosen by the king, of whom the chancellor of the exchequer and one of the principal secretaries of state were to be two; and in absence of the chancellor of the exchequer and the principal secretary, the senior of the remaining four was to preside. As neither of the two great functionaries named were ever likely to find time for a constant attendance, the whole business soon rested with that senior, known by the name of the President of the Board of Control, who is essentially a secretary of state for the India department. In the act, however, the authority was vested in the plural number—in commissioners. These commissioners were not to interfere in commercial matters, but in all other matters their power was most extensive. They were vested with a control and superintendence over all civil, military, and revenue officers of the Company, and the directors were obliged to lay before them all papers relative to the management of their possessions, and to obey all orders which they received from them on points connected with their civil or military government, or the revenues of their territories. The commissioners were obliged to return the copies of papers which they received from the directors in fourteen days, with their approbation, or to state at large their reasons for disapproving of them; and their dispatches, so approved or amended, were to be sent to India, unless the commissioners should attend to any representations of the court of directors respecting further alterations in them. The court of directors had no power to send any orders regarding their civil or military government without the sanction of the commissioners; but these might (if the directors neglected to send true copies of their intended dispatches, upon any subject, within fourteen days) send by themselves orders and instructions relative to the civil or military concerns of the Company to any of the presidencies of India: and these instructions the court of directors were, in such case, bound to forward. If the commissioners forwarded any orders to the court of directors on points not relating to the civil or military government, or to the revenues of the territorial possessions of the Company, the directors might appeal to the king and council.* In all cases of secrecy, and particularly such as related

* This clause, which, as it originally stood, was strangely conceived, soon became a dead letter, and was, we believe, never once acted upon. The new and extraordinary court for the trial of Indian delinquents was to be formed of four members of the House of Lords and six of the House of Commons, to be chosen by their respective Houses, and of one judge from each of the common law courts in Westminster Hall. They were to have power to send for papers, persons, and records; to commit to prison for all prevarication: to compel witnesses, by punishment as for a misdemeanor, to attend their summonses, and to force them to give evidence, by fine or imprisonment, at their own discretion. The British subjects in India took the alarm, as well they might, and soon began to pour in petitions and representations. Subsequently the clause was somewhat remodelled and changed.

to war or peace with the native powers of India, the commissioners had the power of sending their orders to the local government of India through a secret committee of the court of directors, which committee, by the act, could in this case only be considered as the vehicle of the instructions to the local authorities of India. The chief government in India was to consist of a governor-general and a council of three, of whom the commander-in-chief of the forces for the time being was to be one, and to have a voice and precedence next after the governor-general; but the said commander-in-chief was not to succeed as governor-general in the event of a death or vacancy, unless by a special appointment of the court of directors. The constitution of the government of the subordinate presidencies of Madras and Bombay was the same as at Bengal, and at both the governor had, like the governor-general, a casting vote in council. But these two minor presidencies were placed completely under the rule of the governor-general in council, on all points connected with their relations or negotiations with the country powers, peace or war, and the application of their revenues and military forces. These subordinate presidencies were strictly prohibited from making war or peace without orders from the governor-general at Calcutta, or from the court of directors, or the secret committee at home, except only in cases of sudden emergency or imminent danger, when it would be ruinous or unsafe to postpone such hostilities or treaties. The supreme government at Calcutta was to be intrusted with the power of suspending the governors of Madras and Bombay in case of any disobedience of orders; but the power of war and peace was now to be restrained even in the supreme government at Calcutta, it being declared by this act that, as the pursuit of schemes of conquest was repugnant to the wish, to the honour, and the policy of the British nation, it was not lawful for the governor-general in council, without the express authority of the court of directors or of the secret committee, to commence hostilities, or to enter into any treaty for making war against any of the native princes or states in India, or into any treaty guaranteeing the dominions of such princes or states, except when hostilities had been commenced or preparations actually made for the attack of the British nation in India, or of some of the states and princes whose dominions the British nation was engaged by subsisting treaties to protect and defend. The right of recall was vested wholly in the crown:* the king was to have power to recall the governor-general or any other officer of the Company; and, if the court of directors did not within two months nominate to vacancies which might occur in any of the principal charges or employments, such as governor-general, governor, commander-in-chief, or member of council, then the crown became possessed of the right to make such nomination. The patronage of India, by this bill, was left to the directors, but with material deductions; for the king was to name the commander-in-chief, who was always to be second in council; and the governor-general, governors of Madras and Bombay, and members of all the three councils, were subject to the approbation of the king, who was to have the power of recalling any or all of them. The secret

* The directors were soon made to feel that this right of recall was pretty nearly tantamount to the right of nomination. In the month of October, 1784, before Pitt's bill was two months old, the directors appointed Mr. Holland, an old servant, who had been long at Madras, and was reputed to have ability, integrity, and an extensive knowledge of the country, to succeed Lord Macartney in the government of that part of India, in case of his lordship's resignation, death, or removal. The board of control objected to the choice. The court of directors persisted in their appointment, and intimated that the board of control were meddling in a matter that did not belong to them, inasmuch as by the late act the power of appointing to such places rested with the directors. Hereupon the board of control said:—"If the reasons which we have adduced do not satisfy the court of directors, we have certainly no right to control their opinion." But at the same time they informed Mr. Holland that if he accepted the appointment and went to India, he would be recalled the moment he got there. This settled the dispute; and Mr. Dundas was allowed to nominate Sir Archibald Campbell, who, whatever were his other qualifications, had the merit of being Dundas's friend.

committee, which in effect was to share nearly all power with the board of control, was to be chosen by the directors, and not to exceed the number of three. By the clause in which the commissioners or board of control was authorised in all cases requiring secrecy to transmit their orders through this secret committee of three without communicating them to the court of directors, and to receive answers under the same concealment, the board of control and the committee of secrecy could interrupt and suspend, as often as they thought proper, the power of the court of directors. In fact, as far as related to all the higher functions of government in India, the court of directors was reduced to three, and these three, in conjunction with the president of the board of control, formed the executive. The greatest outcry raised against Fox's India Bill was that it went to increase in a most dangerous degree the influence of the minister.* As Pitt's bill followed so closely on that scheme, and as all the exclamations and declamations made by himself and his party were fresh in the public mind, it was incumbent on him to shun as much as possible any appearance of an intention to increase the ministerial patronage, or that most envied part of it which lay in the distribution of new places of great profit. Hence no salaries were annexed to the offices of president or member of the board of control, Pitt pretending and openly stating, to serve the purpose of the moment, that these offices might always be filled without any increase of expense to the nation, or of influence to the crown, by individuals holding other places of profit. So glaring an anomaly as that of public men doing double duty without double pay must have shocked the tenderest sensibilities of many members of both Houses; and every one that reflected on this new constitution for the India Company, and on the extent of difficult and important business it put into the hands of the board of control, must have foreseen that so much work would not long be done for nothing. Burke, who is generally believed to have had more to do in the composition of the unfortunate India Bill brought in by the coalition than Fox, whose name it bears, declared that Pitt's bill in reality vested in the crown an influence paramount to any that had been created by Mr. Fox's bill—that it put the whole East India Company into the hands of the crown. Fox said,—"By whom is this board of superintendents to be appointed? Is it not by his majesty? . . . . Is not this giving power to the sovereign for the ends of influence, and for the extension of that system of corruption which has been so justly reprobated? . . . . The last parliament, to their immortal honour, voted the increasing influence of the crown to be inconsistent with public liberty. The right honourable gentleman, in consequence of that vote, finds the influence probably unequal to the great objects of his administration. He is therefore willing to take the present opportunity of making his court where he knows our late doctrine will never be acceptable; and the plain language of the whole matter now is, that the patronage of India must be appended to the executive power of this country, which otherwise will not be able to carry out schemes hostile to the constitution, in opposition to the House of Commons." And, indeed, it can scarcely be denied that Pitt's bill gave as much influence and patronage to the crown as Fox's bill would have given to parliament; but, as, by the rejected bill, parliament was only to name the board of seven directors in the first instance, the power would in four years have reverted to the crown, so that the operation of the two bills in

* In the debate on Fox's motion for leave to bring in his India Bill, Pitt had said, among other things still more pointed, "Was it not the principal and declared object of this bill, that the whole system of Indian government should be placed in *seven persons*, and those under *the immediate appointment of no other than the minister himself*?" In a subsequent debate he had said that he objected to the bill "because it created a new and enormous influence by vesting *in certain nominees of the minister* all the patronage of the East." But Pitt's exquisite alarms about the crown and constitution all subsided when these *seven men*—soon reduced, in effect, to *four*—were to be appointed *solely by himself*; when the three directors and the members of the privy council were to be, to all intents and purposes, *his own nominees*.

increasing the power of the crown would have been pretty nearly equal. Fox did not indeed propose the creation of a board of control out of the members of his majesty's privy council; but the seven supreme and controlling directors named by the king could not be less dependent on the crown than the members of the privy council selected by his majesty to be a board of control. In either case the influence of the crown would be nearly the same; but, in other points of view, Pitt's scheme seems preferable to that of Fox. It had, for example, become essential that there should be, at least in all political matters, such as wars, treaties, &c., a perfect accordance between the government at home and the government in India; and that the two should not be pulling different ways, as they had so often done, not less to the dishonour than to the loss of the nation, and not less to the disgrace of the home government than to the danger of the governor-general, governors, and councils in India. Now, the only way of securing this perfect accordance was to blend the two governments, and to put at the head of them, with an ample controlling power in India, men who were members of the British administration, or — as happened almost immediately after — a man who was in fact king's secretary of state for Indian affairs, and one of the most essential parts of the national administration. It is altogether beyond our ingenuity to conjecture how the Indian executive could have been reduced to a proper working number, or how the agreement and concord between the national government and the Company, and its servants in India, could possibly have been brought about, without increasing the power and influence either of the crown or of the parliament. In which hands, for the greater benefit of the liberties of the nation, the deposit ought to have been made, we will not determine; but it appears to us that the surest way to throw the affairs of India into hopeless confusion, and eventually to lose our empire in the East, would have been to have left it wholly dependent on the conflicting votes of a popular assembly, not exempt from the ordinary vices and passions of mankind, not self-denying patriots or martyrs, but, at the time, rather unhappily distinguished by what Oliver Cromwell called "self-seeking."

The enormous debts of Mohammed Ali, Nabob of the Carnatic, or, as he was more commonly called in England, "the Nabob of Arcot," had been several times the subject of parliamentary discussion, and had for a long time excited the attention of the nation, who had been taught to believe that the greater part of the claims of the nabob's creditors were fictitious and fraudulent. Mr. Macpherson, a man of intrigue and ability, had come over to England as far back as the year 1768, to plead the cause of the Indian prince with the English ministry, but in a secret and under-hand way. To the Duke of Grafton, who was then at the head of the cabinet, the acute Isle-of-Skye man represented that the nabob had personal merits as a statesman and a gentleman; that Great Britain owed the rise of her power in India chiefly to him; that he was treated with indignity, and even tyranny, by the Company; and that the servants of the Company claimed from him sums of money which he did not owe. Macpherson employed his pen, which was a good one, in advocating the cause of the nabob in many publications; he offered bribes or presents to the minister—Grafton, that compound of villany and violence, according to Junius and John Wilkes—who refused to accept them; he offered bribes to the minister's secretary, but he also rejected them; and he next offered to advance seventy lacs of rupees, or even more, to the minister, as a loan for the public service, at the low interest of two per cent., but this also was declined. Either to rid themselves of a troublesome opponent, or from a sense of his very great address and abilities, the Company promoted instead of dismissing this intriguing servant; and from the time that Macpherson had attained the rank of a member of the supreme council of Calcutta, he had ceased to care about the surcharged debts and grievances of the Nabob of Arcot. The select committee of the House of Commons not only expressed their disapprobation of Mac-

pherson's appointment, but accused him of having by his "flattering delusions," encouraged extravagant hopes and expectations in the nabob of becoming an independent prince; and this, they said, had disturbed the peace of India, shaken the lawful government of the Company at Madras, &c. There were other recondite passages, into which we cannot enter, in this almost interminable business. "The debts of the Nabob of Arcot," "the Nabob of Arcot's debts," were sounds that rang through the land session after session, year after year, like some mysterious Shibboleth; and in every bill, in nearly every discussion on Indian affairs, it was said, and by every party in turn, that something must be done to effect a settlement, and to check a progressive increase, by interest and compound interest, by agencies, brokerages, and additions of all kinds, that bade fair to rival the national debt of Great Britain. Dundas, in his scheme for the management of Indian affairs, had proposed that the governor-general and the council "should take into consideration the present state of the affairs of the Nabob of Arcot, and inquire into and ascertain the origin, nature, and amount of his just debts;" and then take the most speedy and effectual measures for discharging them. Fox's India bill contained a clause to the same effect, together with a provision to prevent those evils in future, by declaring it "unlawful for any servant, civil or military, of the Company, to be engaged in the borrowing or lending of any money, or in any money transactions whatsoever, with any protected or other native prince." Pitt's India Bill was still more explicit. The clause in it was—"Whereas very large sums of money are claimed to be due to British subjects by the Nabob of Arcot, . . . . be it enacted, that the court of directors shall, as soon as may be, take into consideration the origin and justice of the said demands; and that they shall give such orders to their presidencies and servants abroad for completing the investigation thereof, as the nature of the case shall require; and for establishing, in concert with the nabob, such fund for the discharge of those debts which shall appear to be justly due, as shall appear consistent with the rights of the Company, the security of the creditors, and the honour and dignity of the said nabob." As this bill, and all the parts of it, had become law, and as further delay seemed impracticable or dangerous, the court of directors proceeded to act upon it, considering that, by the words of the clause, which mentioned nothing about the board of control, first called into existence by this bill, it was clearly and wholly devolved upon them; nor do the words of the clause admit of any other interpretation. Accordingly the directors drew up a set of instructions for their presidencies and servants in India, to inquire into the origin and justice of the said demands, &c.; and they transmitted copies of these instructions to the board of control merely for approbation: but, to their astonishment and consternation, the board of control, with the prepotent Dundas at its head (for he had assumed the lead immediately after the passing of Pitt's bill, although Lord Sydney, one of the secretaries of state, had been appointed to the office of president), took the whole matter into their own hands, and, with an intrepidity in injustice which has not often been surpassed, commanded and decreed that the Nabob of Arcot's debts should be admitted *in toto*, without any inquiry at all. Dundas said, in this famous decree, that they were also to be discharged *in toto*; but to extract payment for such enormous sums was beyond his power and the limited duration of the life of man. The debts were divided by the board of control into three classes; and twelve lacs annually were to be set apart by the nabob or by the Company administering for him, to pay interest for, and to go to the gradual liquidation of, the said debts. The current interest was to vary from six to ten and twelve per cent. The court of directors, whose hostility to Fox had materially contributed to place Pitt and Dundas in their proud pre-eminence, and who had expected a large return of ministerial gratitude—so credulous at times are the most practised politicians—concealed their rage, and mildly represented to the board of con-

trol that the debts ought to be examined before being admitted; that they considered the inquiry as left to them; that the portion of the debts owing to the Company as a body ought certainly to be discharged before any private claims, &c.: they submitted to the consideration of the board whether inquiry could have done any harm; and they said, with a little more boldness, that their duty required them to state their strongest dissent to the appropriation of the twelve lacs of rupees per annum by the board. They represented that the nabob had, long before the passing of the act, agreed to pay them seven lacs per annum in liquidation of their arrears; and they declared that, until their own debts should be discharged, they could by no means consent to give up any part of the seven lacs to the private creditors.* This correspondence between the court of directors and the board of control passed in the autumn of 1784. Soon after the re-assembling of parliament, Fox, not without a little malicious exultation at the woful discovery made by the directors, that they had caught a Tartar in Dundas, moved that the directions for inquiry, &c. which had been transmitted to India by the court of directors, should be laid before the House. The foulest motives were attributed to the great manager of the board of control in rescinding those instructions. Dundas undertook the defence of the board of control, which was his own defence. He maintained that the conduct of the board had been within the strict letter of the statute (Pitt's bill), inasmuch as that board was enabled by a clause in the act to originate orders in cases of urgent necessity, and to direct their being transmitted to India; nor had the orders of the board about the nabob's debts been given till after a careful and *sufficient* examination into the subject and the justice of the claims. He contended that the papers in the Company's records at the India House—which by the way Dundas had hardly seen, even at a distance—contained as full information on every transaction relating to the nabob's debts as the court of directors could ever hope to receive. He next proceeded to justify all the claims made on the nabob, merely hinting that inquiry would still be open as to some of the private creditors. (This last hint, however, differed widely from the official letter of the board of control, which indicated no such possibility of inquiry, but affirmed—1. That it was inexpedient to keep the nabob's debts longer afloat; 2. That the final conclusion of the business would tend to promote tranquillity; and, 3. That the debts were admitted, inasmuch as the debtor, Mohammed Ali, had concurred with the creditors in establishing the validity of their claims.) Dundas concluded with cautioning the House, if they wished to have an established government in India, not to suffer themselves to imbibe prejudices against a board that was but newly instituted, and not to interfere with the *executive power on all frivolous occasions*. Mr. Smith, the chairman of the court of directors, said that some of the private debts ordered to be paid by the board of control, without inquiry, might be just and unexceptionable; but that others were of a very different complexion. He might be supposed to know as much of the records at the India House as the recently appointed board of control could possibly know; and he was of opinion that they did not contain all the information required. Smith was followed by Sir Thomas Rumbold, the late governor of Madras, whom Dundas had previously threatened with impeachment or a bill of pains and penalties. Rumbold threw suspicion on nearly all the debts public or private—the old debt of 1767, the cavalry loan of 1777, and the consolidated debt of the same year, which last, he said, swallowed up all the others, by its magnitude and enormity. Many of the sums, he affirmed, had been lent to the nabob, in direct contradiction to the standing orders of the Company, which prohibited their servants from lending money to the princes of the country; and he added that he believed this was not the worst circumstance attending that particular debt. But the impression

* Appendix to Burke's Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's Debts.

made by these two speeches was nothing compared to the effect produced by Burke, who rose on this evening—the 28th of February, 1785—to deliver his wonderful speech "on the Nabob of Arcot's debts." Under the touch of this great master the crooked figures of accounts turned into glorious figures of rhetoric; and a subject as dry as the sand of the desert became interesting, succulent, and full of life, like the luxuriant vegetation of some Indian valley:—"The times we live in, Mr. Speaker," said Burke, "have been distinguished by extraordinary events. Habituated, however, as we are, to uncommon combinations of men and affairs, I believe nobody recollects anything more surprising than the spectacle of this day. The right honourable gentleman (Dundas) whose conduct is now in question formerly stood forth in this House the prosecutor of the worthy baronet who spoke after him (Rumbold). He charged him with several grievous acts of malversation in office, with abuses of a public trust of a great and heinous nature. In less than two years we see the situation of the parties reversed: and a singular revolution puts the worthy baronet in a fair way of returning the prosecution in a recriminatory bill of pains and penalties, grounded on a breach of public trust, relative to the government of the very same part of India. . . . .* But the change of relation between these two gentlemen is not so striking as the total difference of their deportment under the same unhappy circumstances. Whatever the merits of the worthy baronet's defence might have been, he did not shrink from the charge. He met it with manliness of spirit, and decency of behaviour. What would have been thought of him if he had held the present language of his old accuser? When articles were exhibited against him by that right honourable gentleman, he did not think proper to tell the House that we ought to institute no inquiry, to inspect no paper, to examine no witness. He did not tell us (what at that time he might have told us with some show of reason) that our concerns in India were matters of delicacy; that to divulge anything relative to them would be mischievous to the state. He did not tell us that those who would inquire into his proceedings were disposed to dismember the empire. He had not the presumption to say that, for his part, having obtained, in his Indian presidency, the ultimate object of his ambition, his honour was concerned in executing with integrity the trust which had been legally committed to his charge; that others, not having been so fortunate, could not be so disinterested; and therefore their accusations could spring from no other source than faction, and envy to his fortune. Had he been frontless enough to hold such vain, vapouring language in the face of a grave, a detailed, a specified matter of accusation, whilst he violently resisted

* The charges brought against Sir Thomas Rumbold, late governor of Madras, &c., and assuredly a corrupt and mercenary man, had been sufficiently heavy. The Company, discovering among other particulars, that, though his salary and emoluments did not exceed 20,000*l.* a-year, he had remitted to Europe as savings made in less than three years 164,000*l.*, dismissed him from their service in 1781, together with four members of the council of Fort St. George. In April, 1782, Dundas, as chairman of the secret committee, had presented such a report and made such a speech against Sir Thomas, that it was impossible to avoid criminal proceedings. Accordingly, some months after, Dundas himself had been allowed to draw up articles of charge, and to bring in a bill of pains and penalties for high crimes and misdemeanors committed by the said Sir Thomas Rumbold. But Rumbold had made an able defence, and, as the House grew weary of the business, and were agitated by the war of parties, the bill had been neglected, and after the dismissal of the coalition ministry a motion had been carried for adjourning the further consideration of the bill for six months; and so the whole matter was let drop just at the time when Dundas, the original prosecutor, by coming into power with Pitt, might have continued the prosecution with sure effect. As long as the Rockingham party or the coalition had been in office, Dundas had bitterly complained of obstacles thrown in the path of justice, of the thin attendance and the indifference of the House to the delinquencies of Rumbold. It was impossible that all these circumstances should not give rise to rumours very unfavourable to Dundas. One of these rumours, as reported by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, was that Sir Thomas Rumbold entered into a very close connexion with Rigby, who was the intimate friend of Dundas, and, though no longer in office, "still possessed great capacities of being useful, and was not supposed to lie under the dominion of any fastidious scruples."

everything which could bring the merits of his cause to the test; had he been wild enough to anticipate the absurdities of this day—that is, had he inferred, as his late accuser has thought proper to do, that he could not have been guilty of malversation in office for this curious reason, that he had been in office; had he argued the impossibility of his abusing his power on this sole principle, that he had power to abuse, he would have left but one impression on the mind of every man who heard him and who believed him in his senses—that, in the utmost extent, he was guilty of the charges." But it was for the House to consider whether the chancellor of the exchequer and his friend the treasurer of the navy, acting as a board of control, were justified by law or policy in suspending the legal arrangements for inquiry made by the court of directors, in order to transfer the public revenues to the private emolument of certain servants of the Company without the inquiry prescribed by parliament. He maintained that the board of control had no right whatsoever to intermeddle in that business; that the intermeddling of ministers was a downright usurpation, and a forcing themselves into a very suspicious office, which every man delicate as to his character would rather have sought to avoid. It had been objected, over and over again, that gentlemen living all their lives in England could not comprehend the labyrinths of Indian affairs. "But," exclaimed Burke, "on any specific matter of delinquency you are as capable of judging as if the same thing were done at your own door. Fraud, injustice, oppression, peculation, engendered in India, are crimes of the same blood, family, and caste with those that are born and bred in England. To go no further than the case before us: you are just as competent to judge whether the sum of FOUR MILLIONS STERLING ought or ought not to be passed from the public treasury into a private pocket, without any title except the claim of the parties, when the issue of facts is laid in Madras, as when it is laid in Westminster." He called the nabob's debts "a gigantic phantom of debt," "a prodigy that would have filled any common man with superstitious fears." Any man but the confident young minister "would have exorcised that shapeless, nameless form, and, by everything sacred, would have adjured it to tell by what means a small number of slight individuals, of no consequence or situation, possessed of no lucrative offices, without the command of armies, or the known administration of revenues, without profession of any kind, without any sort of trade sufficient to employ a pedlar, could have, in a few years (as to some, even in a few months), amassed treasures equal to the revenues of a respectable kingdom? Was it not enough to put these gentlemen, in the noviciate of their administration, on their guard, and to call upon them for a strict inquiry (if not to justify them in a reprobation of those demands without any inquiry at all), that, when all England, Scotland, and Ireland had for years been witness to the immense sums laid out by the servants of the Company in stocks of all denominations, in the purchase of lands, in the buying and building of houses, in the securing quiet seats in parliament, or in the tumultuous riot of contested elections, in wandering throughout the whole range of those variegated modes of inventive prodigality which sometimes have excited our wonder, sometimes raised our indignation; *that, after all, India was four millions still in debt to them!*" Dundas had made some sneering allusions to Fox's India Bill, and the way in which it dealt with the present question. He (Burke) denied that these private debts were ever protected, or funds provided for them, by Fox's bill, which positively forbade any British subject to receive assignments upon any part of the territorial revenue of the nabob. He accused ministers of having wickedly put their hands in the public purse for this, and for transactions ten times worse than this. The motive, he said, was plain—it was to obtain *parliamentary influence*, that source of all our misgovernment, and of almost all our misery. To that influence everything was to be sacrificed by a remorseless administration. "Our wonderful minister, as you all know, formed a new plan, a plan *insigne, recens, indic-*

*tum ore alio*—a plan for supporting the freedom of our constitution by court intrigues, and for removing its corruptions by Indian delinquency. To carry that bold paradoxical design into execution sufficient funds and apt instruments became necessary. You are perfectly sensible that a parliamentary reform occupies his thoughts day and night. In his anxious researches upon this subject, natural instinct, as well as sound policy, would direct his eyes and settle his choice on Paul Benfield.* Paul Benfield is the grand parliamentary reformer, the reformer to whom the whole choir of reformers bow, and to whom even the right honourable gentleman himself must yield the palm: for what region in the empire, what city, what borough, what county, what tribunal in this kingdom is not full of Paul's labours? Others have been only speculators—he is the grand practical reformer; and, whilst the chancellor of the exchequer pledges in vain the man and the minister to increase the provincial members, Mr. Benfield has auspiciously and practically begun it. Leaving far behind even Lord Camelford's generous design of bestowing Old Sarum on the Bank of England, Mr. Benfield has thrown in the borough of Cricklade to reinforce the county representation. Not content with this, in order to station a steady phalanx for all future reforms, this public-spirited usurer, amidst his charitable toils for the relief of India, did not forget the poor rotten constitution of his native country. For her he did not disdain to stoop to the trade of a wholesale upholsterer for this House, to furnish it, not with the faded tapestry figures of antiquated merit, such as decorate, and may reproach, some other houses, but with real, solid, living patterns of true modern virtue. Paul Benfield made (not reckoning himself) no fewer than eight members in the last parliament. What copious streams of pure blood must he not have transfused into the veins of the present? But what is even more striking than the real services of this new-imported patriot, is his modesty. As soon as he had conferred this benefit on the constitution, he withdrew himself from our applause. He conceived that the duties of a member of parliament might be as well attended to in India as in England, and the means of reformation to parliament itself be far better provided. Mr. Benfield was therefore no sooner elected than he set off for Madras, and defrauded the longing eyes of parliament. We have never enjoyed in this House the luxury of beholding that minion of the human race, and contemplating that visage which has so long reflected the happiness of nations." But, though Paul was gone to India, he had left his representative and exact resemblance behind him in that grand contractor Mr. Richard Atkinson—"a name that will be well remembered as long as the records of this House, as long as the records of the British treasury, as long as the monumental debt of England shall endure." "This gentleman, Sir," continued Burke, "acts as attorney for Mr. Paul Benfield. Every one who hears me

* This money-getting man enjoyed but an indifferent reputation for honour or honesty. Terrible things had been related of him in committees of the House of Commons, and afterwards published in parliamentary reports, &c. The select committee at Fort St. George had, in 1783, accused him of almost every possible rascality in his transactions in the Carnatic, and with the nabob in particular. They said that, to secure the permanency of his own power and profit, he had kept the nabob an absolute stranger to the state of his affairs; that he had kept the accounts and correspondence in the English language, which neither the nabob nor his son could read; that he had surrounded the nabob on every side, keeping him totally at his mercy, and "*making him believe what was not true, and subscribe to what he did not understand.*" They solemnly declared, not as parties in a cause, or even as voluntary witnesses, but as executive officers in the discharge of their duty, and under the impression of the sacred obligation which bound them to truth and justice, that Paul Benfield and his creatures had prosecuted projects to the injury and danger of the Company and individuals, and that it would be improper to trust and dangerous to employ them any longer. Mr. Petrie, late resident at Tanjore, on his examination before the select committee of the Commons, deposed to the facts that Paul Benfield had abused his authority, and had been a great extortioner. Being asked whether he was not informed by the rajah or by others, that Mr. Benfield, while he managed the revenues of Tanjore, treated the inhabitants with great rigour, he said, he did hear from the rajah that Mr. Benfield did treat the inhabitants with rigour. In reply to other questions Mr. Petrie alleged that Benfield had often treated the Rajah of Tanjore, the Nabob of Arcot, and the nabob's eldest son, in a very harsh manner.

is well acquainted with the sacred friendship, the steady mutual attachment, that subsists between him and the present minister." He would not, he said, determine how much Mr. Richard Atkinson had been consulted in the original frame and fabric of the bill commonly called Mr. Pitt's India bill; but the public was an indignant witness of the ostentation with which that measure was made his own, and the authority with which he brought up clause after clause, to stuff and fatten that corrupt act. These clauses were all received by the new minister with implicit submission: the reformation might be estimated by seeing who was the reformer; and Paul Benfield's associate and agent was held up to the world as legislator of Hindustan. Burke next proceeded to couple more closely the Indian interest and the parliamentary majority which Pitt had so suddenly obtained by the general election in the preceding year; and though, as we have stated, the unpopularity of the coalition ministry and other causes were in operation, few men will now doubt but that an immense influence was exercised by the richest of the nabobs, and by others not quite so rich, in favour of the young premier. "But," said Burke, "it was necessary to authenticate the coalition between the man of intrigue in India and the minister of intrigue in England, by a studied display of the power of this their connecting link (Atkinson). Every trust, every honour, every distinction was to be heaped upon him He was at once made a director of the India Company; made an alderman of London; and to be made, if ministers could prevail (and I am sorry to say how near, how very near, they were prevailing), representative of the capital of this kingdom. But to secure his services against all risk, he was brought in for a ministerial borough. His advertisements show his motives and the merits upon which he stood. For your minister this worn-out veteran submitted to enter into the dusty field of the London contest; and you all remember that in the same virtuous cause he submitted to keep a sort of public office or counting-house, where the whole business of the last general election was managed. It was openly managed by the direct agent and attorney of Benfield. It was managed upon Indian principles, and for an Indian interest. This was the golden cup of abominations; this the chalice of the fornications of rapine, usury, and oppression, which was held out by the gorgeous Eastern harlot, which so many of the people, *so many of the nobles*, of this land have drained to the very dregs. Do you think that no reckoning was to follow this lewd debauch—that no payment was to be demanded for this riot of public drunkenness and national prostitution? Here! you have it here before you! The principal of the grand election-manager must be indemnified: accordingly the claims of Benfield and his crew must be put above all inquiry! For several years Benfield has appeared as the chief proprietor, as well as the chief agent, director, and controller of this system of debt. The worthy chairman of the Company has stated the claims of this single gentleman on the Nabob of Arcot as amounting to 500,000*l.*" But Burke went on to show that the debts or claims of the great Paul were continually varying in their dimensions, expanding, and contracting, and then expanding again, according to circumstances, now sleeping under one rate of interest, and now waking to clutch some four or six per cent. additional interest. According to the orator's calculation, by the scheme now adopted by ministers, the smallest of the sums ever mentioned for Mr. Benfield would form a capital of 592,000*l.*, at the interest (fixed at last) at six per cent.* "Thus," said he, "besides the arrears of three years, amounting to 106,500*l.* (which as fast as received may be legally lent out at twelve per cent.), Benfield receives by the ministerial grant an annuity of 35,520*l.* a-year. . . . .

* Paul Benfield was not so green in these practices as to keep all these shares or claims of debt in his own hands or under his own name. They were assigned over, or, as Burke said, "the general corps of creditors, as well as Mr. Benfield himself, not looking well into futurity, nor presaging the minister of this day, thought it not expedient that such a name as his should stand at the head of their list. It was therefore agreed amongst them that Mr. Benfield should disappear by making over his debts to Messrs. Taylor, Majendie, and Call, and should in return be secured by their bond."

Here is a specimen of the new and pure aristocracy created by the right honourable gentleman (Pitt), as the support of the crown and constitution against the old, corrupt, refractory, natural interests of this kingdom; and this is the grand counterpoise against all odious coalitions of these interests. A single Benfield outweighs them all!"* After giving many details of this dark transaction—and his assertions were never satisfactorily answered—after holding up to scorn the education, the manners, the meannesses of the great Paul, Burke concluded:—"I believe, after this exposure of facts, no man can entertain a doubt of the collusion of ministers with the corrupt interest of the delinquents in India. . . . I have thus laid before you, Mr. Speaker, I think with sufficient clearness, the connexion of the ministers with Mr. Atkinson at the late general election; I have laid open to you the connexion of Atkinson with Benfield; I have shown Benfield's employment of his wealth in creating a parliamentary interest to procure a ministerial protection; I have set before your eyes Benfield's large concern in the debt, his practices to hide that concern from the public eye, and the liberal protection which he has received from the minister. If this chain of circumstances does not lead you necessarily to conclude that the minister has paid to the avarice of Benfield the services done by Benfield's connexions to his ambition, I do not know anything short of the confession of the party that can persuade you of his guilt." But votes in the House of Commons were submissive to other influences than those of astounding eloquence and still more astounding facts; and Fox and Burke were out-voted by a majority of nearly one hundred—the numbers being 164 against 69. But out of doors—for Burke immediately published his speech, with a copious appendix of facts and parliamentary reports—the effect produced was tremendous. Many men were made to doubt whether the young premier was a "heaven-born minister," and imputations were heaped upon Dundas, from which he never escaped during the rest of his public life.* The nabob's debts, classed or lumped, were all to be discharged in process of time; and the high interest upon them was guaranteed and secured by the faith of the British government. We know not whether the business is settled even now: it is but a few years since there was still, under the wing of the treasury, a snug little office with two or three gentlemen with large salaries for doing nothing, and three or four clerks with small salaries for doing little, charged with the interminable examination of accounts for the liquidation of the Nabob of Arcot's debts. The diminished phantom will be seen flitting across the stage more than once ere this history closes; but to assist in the

* Here Burke spoilt one of the best parts of his admirable speech, by one of his offensive outbreaks of grossness and bad taste: he added, as descriptive of Benfield and the fate he merited—"A criminal *'who long since ought to have fattened the regim kites with his offal* is by his majesty's ministers enthroned in the government of a great kingdom, and enfeoffed with an estate *which, in the comparison*, effaces the splendour of all the nobility of Europe."

* To some of the vulgar imputations Burke's speech certainly gave no countenance. He did not mean to imply that Pitt and Dundas were to go shares with Paul Benfield, or sordidly to put any part of the money into their own pockets for their own private uses. He drew a strong distinction between two bad offences—both bad, but one more mean than the other. "I know," said he, "that ministers will think it little less than acquittal, that they are not charged with having taken to themselves some part of the money of which they have made so liberal a donation to their partisans. If I am to speak my private sentiments, I think that, in a thousand cases for one, it would be far less mischievous to the public (and full as little dishonourable to themselves) to be polluted with direct bribery, than thus to become a standing auxiliary to the oppression, usury, and peculation of multitudes, in order to obtain a corrupt support to their power. It is by bribing, not so often by being bribed, that wicked politicians bring ruin on mankind. Avarice is a rival to the pursuits of many. It finds a multitude of checks and many opposers in every walk of life. But the objects of ambition are for the few; and every person who aims at indirect profit, and therefore wants other protection than innocence and law, instead of its rival becomes its instrument; there is a natural allegiance and fealty due to this domineering paramount evil from all the vassal vices which acknowledge its superiority, and readily militate under its banners: and it is under that discipline alone that avarice is able to spread to any considerable extent, or to render itself a general public mischief. It is, therefore, no apology for ministers that they have not been bought by the East India delinquents."

formation of an idea as to the extent of the audacity of the Pitt administration in admitting *all* the claims of the Paul Benfields and others, it may be well to mention in this place what happened under other administrations between the years 1805 and 1815. The commissioners appointed by act of parliament in 1805 to examine and decide upon the claims of the private creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, had, by the month of November, 1814, adjudicated on claims to the amount of 20,390,570*l.*, of which only 1,346,796*l.* were admitted as good, all the other claims, to the amount of 19,043,774*l.*, being rejected as bad!

In the course of the year 1786, before Pitt's India bill was two years old, it was found necessary to explain and amend it by *three* new bills, introduced by the minister and his friend Dundas. The first of these bills freed the governor-general from his dependence upon the majority of his council—a dependence which Hastings had found so irksome, and at times so dangerous—by enabling him to act, in extraordinary cases, by himself and on his own personal responsibility, after the opinions of the members of the council, and the reasons with which they supported them, had been duly heard and put upon record. The same bill gave the same discretionary powers to the governors of Madras and Bombay; but it gave the power only to such governor-general or governors as were specifically appointed at home, and not to their casual successors in case of death, &c.; and it did not extend the discretionary power to cases of a judicial nature, or to the alteration of any established regulations for the civil government of the British settlements. It also enabled the offices of governor-general and commander-in-chief to be united in the same person. This was done in order to keep the military power dependent upon the civil power, and so prevent the jealousies and conflicting authorities of the two powers when separate. Burke made one of his most eloquent and vehement speeches against these innovations, which, he said, were calculated and solely intended to establish an absolute despotism in India. Dundas said that despotism might exist in the hands of many, as well as in the hands of one; and that the responsibility of the governor-general to parliament and the nation would be increased in exact proportion with the increase of his power. The second of these three acts was a sham—a barrel thrown to amuse that credulous whale the public; it repealed the clause in Pitt's original act which made necessary the approbation of the crown in the choice of the governor-general; but it left undisturbed the king's power of recall! The third of these amending acts was to repeal, as inquisitorial, and as contrary to the spirit of English law and liberty, that part of Pitt's original bill which bound the servants of the Company, on their return home, to give in a schedule of the property they brought with them or had made in India. If there could have been a chance of obtaining correct schedules, this might have proved an effectual check on rapacity and corruption. But this was clearly an impossibility, unless recourse were had to inquisitorial proceedings of the most odious kind. Indeed, it may be doubted whether any measures short of those employed upon the two old men at Fyzabad would, in some cases, have extracted an accurate account, or anything approaching to it. Either the clause must have remained a dead letter, or an excess of odium must have been produced without any benefit; and it was therefore proper to rescind it. In the course of the same session—in the month of June, 1786—another bill was carried, granting relief to the Company, who had petitioned for it, and enabling them to raise money by the sale of 1,207,559*l.* 15*s.* of the 4,200,000*l.* which they had lent to the public; and also by adding 800,000*l.*, by new subscriptions, to their capital stock.

## CHAPTER XX.

In the mean time Hastings had not been recalled, but had resigned. The two last years of his administration in India formed by far the happiest period of his public life. The peace with France, which paralyzed the most powerful of the native princes, enabled him to get the whole country into a state of tranquillity which had not been known for ages. It also enabled him to extend the British influence in several new directions, and to confirm it in others. Notwithstanding some great exploits, like Rodney's victory and Elliot's defence of Gibraltar, the war had been more dishonourable to England than any in which she had been engaged in modern times: America was lost—disasters had attended her flag almost everywhere except in India, where her power and reputation were far greater at the end than they had been at the beginning of the war. Nor was it a vain boast in Hastings to say—"This is my work! Whatever else I have done, I have done this—I have rescued the Carnatic when at the last gasp; I have preserved and extended the British empire in the East!" No one in India, either native or British, doubted the fact. In the supreme council all opposition ceased or became of the mildest kind, and the records and protests of Clavering, Monson, and Francis were read with astonishment and indignation, and with the intimate conviction that if their schemes had been followed India would have been lost, like America. At the interview at Chunar, Hastings had proposed—or, as he says, Asoft-ul-Dowla had requested—that there should be an annual meeting in Oude between the nabob and the governor-general, in order to settle any difficulties that might arise. Early in the year 1784 Major Palmer, who was commanding the troops there, represented the whole country of Oude as being in an alarming state that called for the presence of the governor-general. At the same time the nabob and his chief minister made similar representations, and implored Hastings to make a visit to Lucknow. The necessary consent of the council was obtained on the 16th of February, and on the following day the governor-general set out for the capital of Oude. In passing through Benares he made some very necessary changes in the government or sub-government of that province, which had suffered severely by the insurrection and the short war of Cheyte Sing, and by the contributions levied afterwards. He arrived at Lucknow on the 27th of March, and stayed there five months, busily engaged with the ministers of the nabob and the agents of other native princes. The poor Great Mogul, Shah Alum, was again a prisoner in the hands of the turbulent chiefs, at Delhi, or somewhere in that neighbourhood; but his eldest son waited upon Hastings to solicit his protection, and the assistance of the Company, in a plan he was entertaining, and which, we believe, was rather to secure the imperial dignity with some territory for himself, than to liberate his helpless, unhappy father. Hastings discovered in this young prince considerable ability and spirit, and a good knowledge of the affairs of the country; he treated him with high distinction, but did nothing for him beyond recommending him to apply for aid to Scindia, the greatest of the Mahratta princes, who at that time kept his court at Agra, and was the friend and ally of the English. The application was made; and Scindia, though he did not go in person, sent his most confidential ministers to Lucknow to confer with the governor-general and the prince. The result of these conferences appears to have been,

that Scindia was to assist the prince, and that the dominions of the Nabob of Oude and of the Company were to be respected in any war that might take place. It is supposed that the governor-general clearly foresaw that the ambitious Mahratta would enter into this struggle only for his own benefit, and that he did not disapprove of his intention of making himself master of Delhi and all Upper India; but this conjecture is scarcely borne out by any evidence; and Hastings afterwards declared that, though he must have been a madman to have involved the Company in a war with the Mahrattas on account of the Mogul or his son, he had never entered into any treaty or negotiations with Scindia for delivering the Mogul into his hands. It, indeed, appears certain that the Mahratta wanted neither encouragement nor assistance from the Company. It was quite enough for him that the English remained neutral; and this they had determined to do.* To prevent what followed in a very few months—that is to say, the alarming increase of the Mahratta power—Hastings, instead of being strictly bound by orders from home to preserve peace at all hazards, ought to have been empowered to renew the war on the Jumna, and ought to have had armies at his disposal strong enough to scour the Mahratta dominions and to occupy Delhi. His first business with the ministers of the Nabob of Oude was to procure more money, and he succeeded in obtaining a considerable sum. He agreed to relieve the nabob by withdrawing some more of the Company's troops, for which that prince had all along been made to pay enormously. The court of directors, having taken into consideration the insurrection at Benares, the treaty of Chunar, and the spoliation which had followed it, had been somewhat startled at the daring conduct of their governor-general, and, with a kind of half justice, had ordered that the jaghires of the Begums should be restored, taking care to say not one word touching their treasure, which had all been spent long ago.† In conformity with the commands of the board, Hastings ordered the jaghires to be given up; and the nabob, to use his own words, "went to Fyzabad for the

* Two facts are proved—1. That the court of directors did so determine. 2. That Hastings, who loved new adventures and enterprises, disliked their determination. In a letter written from Lucknow to Major Scott, his agent in London, the governor-general says, in very evident ill-humour:—"I desired powers to relieve the king (Shah Alum), declaring, that I believed I could do it without hostility or expense, provided I had the power of the former, and that I would undertake nothing without a moral certainty of avoiding both. They have 'exhorted me to avoid most sedulously and cautiously in my correspondence with the different princes of India whatever may commit, or be strained into an interpretation of committing, the Company, either as to their arms or treasure.' These are their words, and they are fulsomely loud in their applause of the 'wisdom and sound policy' of the Company's orders against our interference 'in the objects of dispute between the country powers.' Yet they 'hope that I shall be enabled to effect the return of the Shazada to his father with safety and credit to the prince.' As if I could negotiate with my hands tied." What follows in the same letter is truly characteristic of Hastings:—"I have, however, stated the necessity of my having powers so strongly, that I think they will be perplexed to justify their refusal. Yet I know they will refuse, and sincerely hope they will; for, though I have urged this point with all the vehemence of a man whose heart is devoted to the point which he pursues, I have opposed my own interest, ease, and inclinations in it. Some good I will yet do, and may draw the means of it from the over-shot caution with which the instructions of the board are guarded."—*Letter, as given in Gleig's Life.*

† The letter of the board of directors is sufficiently curious; it shows that they had not given credit to Hastings's accounts of the rebellion of the two ladies. "It nowhere appears," say they, "from the papers at present in our possession, that the Begums excited any commotions previous to the imprisonment of Cheyte Sing, and only armed themselves in consequence of that transaction; and it is probable that such a conduct proceeded from motives of self-defence, under an apprehension that they themselves might likewise be laid under unwarrantable contributions." They therefore ordered that an inquiry should be made by the supreme council at Calcutta into the whole business, and that if, upon such inquiry, it should appear that the two ladies were not guilty, then their jaghires should be restored, and an asylum offered them in the Company's territories. To order an inquiry by the council at Calcutta was, as the council was then constituted, very like ordering an inquiry by the governor-general himself into his own conduct. Hastings disregarded the order, and never instituted any inquiry. Besides, if the Begums were innocent, it would have been difficult to show why their money should not be restored as well as their estates.

express purpose of making a respectful tender of them in person to the Begums."* It is, however, quite certain that the nabob made but a very incomplete restitution, holding back for himself a large portion of the jaghires, and pretending that the Begums had made a *voluntary* concession of it to him.†

On the 27th of August, Hastings left Lucknow, and, after staying some time at Benares, he continued his journey to Calcutta, where he arrived at the beginning of November. As far back as the month of March of the preceding year (1783), which was not only previous to the passing of Mr. Pitt's bill, to which his resignation has sometimes been attributed, but even previous to the bringing in of Fox's bill, Hastings had requested the court of directors to name his successor. Some time before undertaking his late journey to Lucknow, which was also many months before the news of Pitt's bill could reach India, he had sent home Mrs. Hastings, whose health was declining; and no one who knew his devotedness to his wife could doubt that in parting from her he had fully made up his mind to resign the government, and follow her as soon as possible. He now wrote to inform the directors that he was coming to England; and that, as a successor had not been appointed, his duties would be discharged, *pro tempore*, by Mr. Macpherson, senior member of the council. Having completed his preparations, he embarked on the 8th of February, 1785, attended by demonstrations that certainly did not mark him out as a tyrant and a monster. As soon as it was publicly known that he was really about to quit the government, which he had held for thirteen years, numerous addresses were got up and presented by all classes: by military officers, by the civil servants of the Company, by factors and traders, by natives as well as by Europeans. If he had been an oppressor at Benares and in Oude, he had been, on the whole, a benefactor to the people of Bengal, who certainly regarded him with warm good-will, and who had conceived a romantic or superstitious admiration of his fortune or luck, of his commanding yet conciliating manners, and of the splendour and pomp with which he always surrounded himself. They regarded him, in fact, in no other light than in that of their sovereign; and not a few shed tears at the thought of losing him. As to the civil servants of the Company, many of them owed to him their appointments or promotions, and all had been impressed by his commanding ability and marvellous rapidity in business; but the admiration and affection of the army, for a mere civilian, was more extraordinary. They had been won by Hastings's new and bold conceptions at the beginning of the war, by the flattering confidence he always reposed in the troops, and by the honours and distinctions with which he treated them on all proper occasions. Thus, when the detachment of Colonel Pearse, which made the remarkable march from Calcutta to Madras, returned after an absence of five years, reduced from 5000 men to 2000, he heaped every distinction upon them: he visited them in their camp, and he passed them in review. Dressed in a plain blue coat, and with his head uncovered, he rode along the lines, producing as much excitement and enthusiasm as the most successful of generals could have done, though attended by all that dazzles and delights the eyes of soldiers, or all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war." One of his last public acts was the issuing of a general order to the army in Bengal, expressing in forcible language his sense of its past services, and affirming that there were no difficulties which the true spirit of military enterprise was not capable of surmounting. It was this conduct that made Hastings as dear to the army as to the other branches of the service. The dark faces of the sepoys looked darker at his departure. When he delivered up the keys of office, and walked down, a private man, to the place of embarkation, his friends and admirers formed a complete avenue, standing on either side of his path; many barges escorted him far down the Hooghly, and some friends did not leave

* Letter to the council.

† Id.

him until the pilot left the ship, far out at sea. During his voyage, which was unusually short for those times, he amused himself with reading, and with writing verses; and in the course of the last novel occupation, he translated that well-known ode, wherein the Roman poet expresses his philosophic indifference to wealth and worldly grandeur, and his love of an humble retirement, with an ease not to be purchased by jewels nor by gold.* And of gold Hastings had comparatively but little. It has been calculated that he might with ease to himself have brought home from two to three millions sterling: what he brought was less than 130,000*l.*—was less than the fortunes which had been made by Barwell and other members of the council—less than what the patriotic Francis had made in six years; and Hastings, who had been thirteen years a governor-general, had been altogether more than thirty years in India! Nor would he have had even this moderate fortune if it had not been for the forethought and management of his wife, who, it is said, accepted presents which he refused, and saved money in private corners which he would have spent in the public service, or in supporting the almost regal splendour of his establishment. He landed at Plymouth in the month of June, and posted up to London and to court, confident of a good reception.

Notwithstanding some irregularities in her marriage, and the severity with which the queen was known to regard all lapses of that kind, Mrs. Hastings, on her arrival, had been received at court most graciously, and had been honoured by marks of her majesty's special favour. Such a relaxation of rigour provoked many comments not very favourable to Queen Charlotte.† People who fancied that the wife of the governor-general must be a congeries of diamonds and

* "Otium Divos rogat."—*Horace.* The ode was inscribed to his friend Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth.—Macaulay, *Edin. Rev., and Essays.*

† Hastings was twice married. His first wife, the widow of a Captain Campbell in the Company's service, died in India, and two children she had by Hastings died in their infancy. On returning from England in 1769, as second in council at Fort St. George, Hastings found among his fellow-passengers on board the "Duke of Grafton" a young and handsome German lady with her husband and two or three children. This husband, who had the style and title of Baron von Imhoff, was a native of Franconia, and in very reduced circumstances: he was going to Madras in the hope of bettering his fortune by painting portraits, or by such other means as might occur in a land abounding in rupees and pagodas. It seems to have been evident from the first that he cared little for his wife or his own honour, and that she did not attempt to conceal how little she cared for her husband. The lady was accomplished and graceful in no common degree: she was a fascinating woman even in her old age. Hastings admired her and became greatly attached. During the long passage he fell ill, and, during his illness, the baroness waited upon him day and night, administering his medicines with her own fair hand. This brought matters to their climax. On landing at Madras a good house and separate establishment were provided for the complaisant Franconian baron and his family, Hastings in the eyes of the world being nothing more than a frequent visitor and warm friend. But we hear no more of the portrait-painting scheme. Monsieur le Baron had entered into arrangements with the second in council and Madame la Baronne which would render such occupations unnecessary, and secure him a return to a cooler climate and a snug retreat in his own country. A suit for divorce was instituted by the lady in the courts of Franconia, the Baron conniving, and Hastings oiling the slow wheels of the law. It appears to have been part of the agreement that the second in council should take the children as well as the wife. The reverend biographer of Mr. Hastings, who, after exonerating the lady and the lover, and even the *husband*, probably thinking it necessary to pay homage to established notions *somewhere*, blames the looseness of the laws of Protestant Germany in reference to the marriage contract, or the facility with which they grant sentences of divorce. It appears, however, that the suit lasted several years. In 1771, when Hastings removed from Madras to assume much higher functions at Calcutta, the baron and his wife—for they were still man and wife, and well conducted, *respectable* people in the eyes of society—went with him, and continued at Calcutta what the biographer calls "the same wise and judicious plan" they had followed at Madras. At last the tedious suit, which must have cost the governor of Bengal no small matter, came to an end; and a decree was received from the Franconian courts divorcing Imhoff from his wife. The baron forthwith left Calcutta with money enough to buy a good estate in "Protestant Germany," leaving his two sons behind him. To use again the words of the biographer, "the Baroness Imhoff became Mrs. Hastings, and the baron returned to his native country a richer man than he ever could have hoped to have become by the mere exercise of his skill as a painter." (Does Mr. Gleig mean this for a lesson and encouragement to future

jewels accounted for the phenomenon by a very easy inductive process. But the "elegant Marian," as Hastings calls his wife in one of his letters to herself, was a graceful, accomplished, and engaging woman, and, what was more, she was a German. These circumstances, perhaps, may account for her majesty's unusual benignity, though we will not venture to say that the predilection for Mrs. Hastings may not have been warmed and increased by the present of a few diamonds and the splendid ivory bedstead, which made as much noise as the Trojan horse. Few women's hearts are proof to such emollients, and Queen Charlotte, with many good essential qualities, was rather fond of getting and hoarding. The reception of Hastings was not less gracious; the king treated him with distinction—a distinction to which the man that had saved India might lay some claim;—the whole court put on its blandest smile, and the governor-general felt by anticipation a coronet on his bald brow—made bald by cares and toils and the burning air of Bengal, rather than by years, for his age did not much exceed fifty. He knew, indeed, that his conduct had been arraigned in the House of Commons by all parties in turn, and by few men with more violence than by Pitt and Dundas, of whom the one was now prime minister and the other at the head of the board of control, with India and all her affairs subject to him. He knew that Burke had saluted his arrival by giving notice of a motion against him, and he had only to look at the daily papers for proofs of the injury which his character had sustained. Yet the applauses of his numerous friends, the blandishments of the court of St. James's, and the approbation of the court of directors, who had received him in a solemn sitting, and whose chairman had read him a vote of thanks for his great achievements, which had been passed without one dissenting voice,—his recollection of what much louder talk and longer debate had ended in, before now, in the House of Commons,—all lulled him into a happy security. When Lord North, after a thousand menaces and at least a hundred set speeches from Burke and Fox, had not been impeached for losing America, was it possible to expect that they would impeach him for saving India? When Lord Sandwich had escaped prosecution, was it likely that they would prosecute Warren Hastings? The elasticity of his own conscience had prevented any dint or wound being made upon it; and he firmly believed that the means he had employed were justified by the ends he had obtained, and that the most violent things he had done were not merely excusable, but laudable, considering the difficulties of the game and the high stakes that he and the Company and the nation were playing for. He believed that his country would reproach him as little as his own conscience. In a letter, written two or three months after his arrival in England, he says—"I find myself everywhere and universally treated with evidences, apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of my country." By this time the king had prorogued parliament, and Burke's menaces had not

indifferent portrait-painters with fascinating wives?)

The new marriage, which must have taken place some time in the year 1777, or some eight years after the first acquaintance on board the "Duke of Grafton," is said to have contributed to free the *lucky* governor-general from his dangerous rival or opponent General Clavering. "The event," says Mr. Macaulay, "was celebrated with great festivities; and all the most conspicuous persons at Calcutta, without distinction of parties, were invited to the government-house. Clavering, as the Mohammedan chronicler tells the story, was sick in mind and body, and excused himself from joining the splendid assembly. But Hastings, whom, as it should seem, success in ambition and in love had put into high good humour, would take no denial. He went himself to the general's house, and at length brought his vanquished rival in triumph to the gay circle which surrounded the bride. The exertion was too much for a frame broken by mortification as well as by disease—Clavering died a few days later." One of Imhoff's sons died young, but the other, assisted by the powerful patronage of the governor-general, rose to rank and distinction, which he is said to have merited, however, by his own excellent abilities and conduct. Mrs. Hastings, as such, was irreproachable. She appears to have conciliated the esteem of society in England. The worst that was said of her in Bengal was, that she took presents with alacrity, without the connivance of Hastings, and that her private hoard amounted to several lacs of rupees; and of this, we believe, no proof was ever given.

gone beyond the notice of motion. Hastings spent the recess at Cheltenham gaily with his wife, or only making a pleasant journey or two to settle for the purchase of Daylesford, a small part of the estates which had belonged to his ancestors in ages when Bengal was unknown. For, like Clive and other men who could boast a long pedigree, one of the first or most ardent wishes of the ex-governor-general on returning to his native land was to obtain possession of some of the ancestral acres, and to revive in the country the long-eclipsed honours of the family name.*

Parliament did not re-assemble until the 24th of January (1786). The first night was passing off in debating the address, in reviewing the mad struggles in Holland between the oligarchy and the democrats, and in censuring or defending the recent foreign policy of Mr. Pitt and his cabinet. Hastings and India seemed to be forgotten, when an officious member, who had often wearied the patience of the House, rose to put a question, through the Speaker, to Mr. Burke. This member, whose officiousness was not altogether a voluntary contribution, was Major John Scott,† whom the governor-general, by a remarkable mistake, had chosen some two or three years before, when accusations first began to thicken, to be his parliamentary champion and principal penman and pamphleteer. It has been hinted that he could not have found a more injudicious defender on any bench of the House of Commons, or a worse scribbler in Grub-street; but, in our opinion, his abilities were by no means so contemptible, though he was certainly wanting in tact, discretion, and parliamentary knowledge. It has been doubted whether, if Major Scott had never appeared within the walls of the House or exerted his pen for the ex-governor-general, Hastings would ever have been impeached at the bar of the Lords. This is allowing too much importance to injudicious speeches and pamphlets; but it is quite certain that Scott hurried on the proceedings. It was his harping that had helped to keep Burke's mind to the subject, and to make that great orator exclaim, towards the close of the late session, in giving his notice of motion, that, if no other member would undertake the business against "a gentleman just returned from India," he would. And the question the Major now put in a tone of defiance was, whether he intended to produce his charges. Thus braved, Burke could do no less than accept the challenge, and his party were bound to stand by him, although several of them were far from feeling any decided vocation for the laborious and invidious task of public accusers. Even Burke himself declared that "he was called upon and driven to the business." On the 17th of February he commenced operations with a call for papers and correspondence deposited at the India House. A notion had got abroad that the king and the whole court were devoted to Hastings, and that ministers had made up their minds to show him all possible favour. Burke, therefore, opened his speech by desiring that two of the resolutions which had been moved and carried on the 29th of May, 1782, by Dundas himself, and which contained unmitigated censure on the conduct of Hastings, should be read. When this was done, he tried to tie ministers, like bears to a stake, to their former votes and opinions—to opinions expressed in the heat and vehemence of opposition; and he told them that the task he was now undertaking would better become them as the authors of those extreme resolutions against the governor-general, and that it would particularly become Dundas, who had now all the powers and resources necessary for a complete examination as an influential member of the board of control. After uttering a terrible philippic against men whose notions of right and wrong varied according to

* While in India, Hastings had repeatedly instructed his attorney to keep his eye on this property, which belonged to Mr. Knight, a London merchant, whose family had possessed the domain for two generations. Hastings now offered far more than the place was worth, but Mr. Knight was not disposed to sell, and the descendant of the ancient lords of the soil did not acquire the property until August, 1788. In the meanwhile he bought a small estate, called Beaumont Lodge, on the skirts of Windsor Forest.—*Gleig, Life.*

† Better known, at a later period, as Major Scott Waring.

their own circumstances, depending on their being out of office or in office—against men who could find everything wrong in India in 1782, and yet make no attempt to punish or correct in 1784—he said that the time was now come for the House to institute penal proceedings. There were, he said, three modes of proceeding against the great offender. The House might order a prosecution by the attorney-general; but to this mode he must object, because the person holding that office appeared unfriendly to the prosecution, so that no reliance could be put upon his exertions; because a jury would not be qualified to decide upon matters of this description; and because he considered the court of King's Bench a tribunal radically unfit to be trusted in questions of a nature so extensive and so elevated. The House, again, might proceed by a bill of pains and penalties; but this mode he considered as unfair, as being attended with great hardship and injustice to the party prosecuted, by obliging him to anticipate his defence, and as it put the House in a situation of shifting its character backwards and forwards, and appearing in the same cause one day as accusers and another day as judges. But there remained one other way of proceeding, the only process that did remain, and that was by the ancient and constitutional mode of impeachment; and this mode he would advise the House to adopt, being careful at the same time to proceed with all possible caution and prudence. It had been usual, he said, to resolve, in the first instance, that the party accused should be impeached, and then to appoint a committee to examine the evidence, and find the articles on which the impeachment was to be founded. This method, and the heat and passion of men's minds, had led the House, on more than one occasion, into the disgraceful dilemma of either abandoning the impeachment they had voted, or of preferring articles which they had not evidence to support. It was upon these grounds that he moved that such papers as were necessary for substantiating the guilt of Mr. Hastings, if guilt there was, should be laid before the House; and that these papers, with the charges extracted from them, should be referred to a committee of the whole House and evidence examined thereon: then, if the charges should appear what he believed them to be, charges of the blackest and foulest nature, and supported by competent evidence, the House might proceed with confidence and dignity to the bar of the Lords. He justified his motives in taking on himself the duties of a public accuser, and he declared his intimate conviction that there had been enormous peculation and gross corruption, and that a torrent of violence, oppression, and cruelty had deluged India during the administration of the late governor-general. Dundas, in reply, said that he had indeed been a member of the secret committee that passed the strong resolutions against Mr. Hastings which had just been read; that he would even confess that he himself had suggested those resolutions; nor had he the smallest scruple to admit that the sentiments he entertained respecting Mr. Hastings, when he proposed those resolutions, he entertained *now*, unchanged and unalterable. But would any one, he asked, pretend that those sentiments or resolutions went so far as to suppose Mr. Hastings to be a fit object for a criminal prosecution? The resolutions went to recall Mr. Hastings, but certainly not to impeach him. In continuing his speech the leader of the board of control seemed to qualify what he had said as to his sentiments remaining unchanged since the time when the resolutions were passed. He thought that the conduct of Mr. Hastings since that period had been not only not criminal, but highly meritorious, and he had for that reason approved of the vote of thanks which the court of directors had unanimously conferred upon him. He said that, the more he examined the conduct of the late governor-general, the more difficult he found it to fix any criminal intention, or to separate it from the conduct of the directors at home, who had expressly commanded or urged him on in so many particulars. With his eye fixed on Fox, who was in power at the time alluded to, he said that, after India had been glutted by the directors, no fewer than *thirty-six* writers had been sent out in one year—in

that year of purity when the situation of the present accusers sufficiently indicated the *shop* from which the commodity was supplied. Dundas had said that he was ready to meet his accusers face to face. "God knows," said Fox, "the power of facing is not to be numbered among the honourable gentleman's wants; even when driven, as on the present occasion, to the miserable necessity of applauding in the latter part of his speech what he condemned in the former." Pitt rose to defend his colleague and bosom friend from the charges of inconsistency. The deadly sin of the coalition, revived on all occasions when the reputation of Fox was to be injured, was used with great effect on the present occasion. "Who is it," asked the premier, "that accuses my honourable friend of inconsistency and guilt in now applauding the man whom he had formerly condemned? Who but he who, in the face of Europe, has united counsels with the man whom for a series of years he had loaded with the most extravagant epithets of reproach, and threatened with the severest punishment!" Pitt extenuated the Rohilla war, which he and Dundas had formerly condemned, and concluded by applauding the *latter part* of Hastings's administration even more warmly than Dundas had just done. This latter part, it must be remembered, embraced the affairs of the Rajah of Benares, the Begums, and Fyzoola Khan, together with some other of Hastings's most questionable proceedings: but this latter part had also contained the triumphant result of the whole, the preservation of India, which was a very hypothetical case when Dundas's resolutions were adopted. From the speeches of Pitt and Dundas, and from sundry other indications in the House, the idea was confirmed that Hastings was to be supported by the whole weight and influence of the cabinet, and that even an inquiry into his conduct would be so hampered as to render it of no avail. Burke's call for papers, however, was not opposed until, on the following day, the 18th, he asked for those relating to the affairs of Oude, in the latter part of Hastings's administration — the part which ministers insisted was free from spot and blemish. The premier and Dundas said that this would be introducing new and endless matter, and that the inquiry, at least for the present, ought to be confined to the period embraced in the reports of the year 1781. But Hastings's friend and advocate, Major Scott, said boldly that the Oude papers would establish and raise the reputation of the late governor-general, and that they ought to be produced. The ministerial objections were then waived. Having carried this demand, Burke, on the 3rd of March, asked for all the papers relating to the Mahratta peace; for it had been determined to find guilt even in that masterpiece of Hastings's policy. Ministers objected that this would be making public diplomatic secrets which could not be revealed with safety; and the papers were refused.* On the 6th of March a demand was made for all papers connected with the negotiations with the son of the Mogul carried on during Hastings's residence at Lucknow. This was refused and out-voted. On the 17th Fox repeated the motion, restricting the production to the correspondence of Major Brown, who had visited Delhi on a mission from Hastings. This, too, was refused by 140 against 73. Copies of many parts of Major Brown's correspondence were in the hands of private individuals, and were read in the course of the debate, to prove the unjust and criminal conduct of Hastings towards that poor shadow, the Great Mogul, who could not help himself, and whom no party in India could or would help, who was about the most contemptible of all the native contenders for territory and dominion, and not a jot less faithless than the worst of them, but who had

* Dundas and Pitt opposed the motion on two grounds: first, that *the treaty in question was a wise and salutary treaty, and had saved the British empire in Asia*; and, secondly, that the production of the papers moved for would discover transactions relative to that peace which ought to be kept a secret from the country powers in India, inasmuch as it would disclose the means by which the several states that were confederate against England were made jealous of each other, and the intrigues by which they were induced to dissolve their confederacy.

found a place in the ardent sympathies of Mr. Burke, to whom he had probably been recommended by that tender-hearted man Philip Francis, the chief source of information to the opposition and prosecution in all matters concerning the governor-general's dealings with the native princes, rajahs, and begums, and a source which had been flowing in full torrent ever since the return of the ex-member of the supreme council of Calcutta to England, with the wound received at Hastings's hand fresh on his body, and a thousand animosities, personal and political, rankling in his mind. Burke's spirit was indisputably high and noble; but he must have been blinded by his enthusiasm in what he considered the greatest cause in which he ever engaged, before he could accept, without doubt or softening, the evidence of a man like Francis in such a case. But that he and his party did so is even more notorious than the fact that the ex-member of the council—who by means never explained had accumulated in six years, and had brought home, a great deal more money than the governor-general—possessed the most vindictive and blackest heart of any public man of that day. Francis himself afterwards declared, from his seat in the House of Commons, that he "supplied the information," that he "furnished the materials," that he "prompted the prosecution!" In the course of the present debates, which succeeded each other at such close intervals, Burke proclaimed, with as much truth, we believe, as eloquence, the perfect sincerity of his conviction, and the purity of his own motives. He had been told that not merely would he be opposed by connexions of the first weight and influence in the country, but that the prosecution would be unpopular with the people of England, who would refuse to follow him in the pursuit of a great man who had rendered such eminent services. "Oh, miserable public!" he exclaimed. "What! For having taken up the cause of their injured and oppressed fellow-subjects in India; for attempting to bring to justice the plunderers of mankind, the desolators of provinces, the oppressors of an innocent and meritorious people, in every rank, sex, and condition, the violators of public faith, the destroyers of the British character and reputation—am I to be unpopular? Those who raise monuments of their benevolence by providing asylums and receptacles for human misery are justly ranked among the benefactors to mankind; but even these acts of patriotism and charity are not to be compared to the noble work of supporting the most sacred rights and valuable interests of mankind, by bringing to public justice the man who has sacrificed them to his cruelty, his avarice, and his ambition." And, however incorrect or overcharged were many of the articles upon which he built his conviction, however erroneous may have been his judgment, and whatever faults may be detected not merely in the forms and technicalities, but in the virulent spirit of his procedure, Burke spoke and acted from first to last like one that felt he had a mission from Heaven to redress the wrongs and prevent the miseries of a large but weak and helpless portion of his fellow-creatures. There was, perhaps, a lack of coolness and discrimination, but assuredly there was no want of honesty in Burke. With a positive knowledge that some dark deeds had been committed, he was prepared to believe in others. He had listened to stories until he believed that Hastings was an incarnate fiend. His glowing wrath seldom permitted him to look either to the tremendous difficulties of the case or to the final success of the governor-general's measures and policy; he had persuaded himself that still more advantageous ends might have been obtained by purer means, and, like some other good men, not statesmen or politicians, he thought it better to lose India than to save it by fraud and cruelty. Francis, as we have stated, had complete possession of Burke's ear: and Francis, ever since his return from the East, had devoted his uncommon energy and cunning, the whole of his extraordinary abilities, his whole life, to the blackening of the Indian administration. The venom which had been spread in former days, when Francis was a poor

clerk in the war-office, over the Duke of Grafton, the Duke of Bedford, Sir William Draper, and the King, was now all concentrated upon Hastings and Impey. The ex-member of council at Calcutta was impelled by ambition and revenge, two of the strongest of human passions, and both of them more violent and intense in the heart of Francis than they are usually found to be in human nature. His ambition was to become governor-general of India, and to add to the great wealth which he had already accumulated there, by means which must have been illegal since the passing of the law which forbade the members of the council and all the servants of the Company from trading and trafficking: and, as we have already said, Francis, almost down to the last day of his life, cherished the hope that, by some administration or other, this ambition might be gratified. How the demoniacal passion of revenge was excited against Hastings has been sufficiently shown. Sir Elijah Impey as chief judge had several times curbed the fiery spirit of the member and leader of council, and upset his daring projects. That Impey had been the school-fellow and early friend of Hastings, was by itself enough to make him odious in the eyes of Francis; but, in addition to all these grounds of hostility, there was this memorable circumstance—*Philip Francis, during his residence in Calcutta, had made himself amenable to a civil prosecution, and it had been the duty of Sir Elijah Impey to pronounce sentence upon him inflicting heavy damages.* It was Francis who, with the majority of the council which he led, might have stayed the execution, if he had been inclined so to do, that first raised the loud outcry in England against the hanging of Nuncomar. The sheriff of Calcutta, who, as in duty bound, presided over that execution, was Alexander Macrabie, a close family connexion of the accuser of Hastings and Impey. This Macrabie was in fact Francis's brother-in-law; and he was generally supposed to be the agent and *quasi* partner through whom the member of council (not satisfied with his 8,000*l.* or 10,000*l.* per annum) had carried on his trading speculations and gratified his money-grabbing propensities. The signature of this Sheriff Macrabie was put to a letter which gave a detailed, exaggerated, and exciting account of Nuncomar's last moments; but as the letter was written with great ability and eloquence, and in a terse and highly finished style, and as the sheriff had never been known as so perfect a penman, it was pretty generally believed, at the time, that his brother-in-law Francis either wrote the whole of the letter, or revised and corrected it, putting in those masterly touches which might be expected from so accomplished and practised a writer as Junius. This memorable letter, though purporting to have been written by the sheriff three hours after the execution of Nuncomar, appears never to have been published, or even heard of, until thirteen years after the said execution, when Sir Gilbert Elliot thrilled the sensibilities of the House of Commons and of the whole nation by introducing the entire substance of it, and as proven indisputable fact, in his denunciatory oration against Sir Elijah Impey. Dodsley's 'Annual Register' for 1788 gives in its historical part Sir Gilbert Elliot's speech, and in its Appendix the whole of the letter attributed to the sheriff, and said to have been written in 1775, the year in which the rajah was hanged in Calcutta.* This, as far as we can discover, was the first publication of the memorable letter, which fell upon the good people of England like a thunderclap. Some letters and extract of letters had been published in 1782, in a book of travels of doubtful authorship, and of very doubtful authenticity, but although the real or assumed author professed to have been in India, and to have had very direct sources of information as to all the iniquities which had been committed by the governor-general and the chief judge, there was not a word said about this famous epistle imputed to Sheriff Macrabie, and said to have been written so immediately after the execution of Nuncomar. There were

* For many years Burke had written the historical part of the "Annual Register." He still had a control over that work, which he certainly made the organ of a party.

many other facts and startling appearances which ought to have shaken Burke's implicit reliance on the testimony of Francis, against two men whom Francis had selected as his most mortal enemies, but Burke's judgment and reasoning faculty appear to have been evaporated by the white heat applied to his imagination; and Francis, having once gained his ear, kept possession of it like the old serpent. The paltry motives attributed to Burke by narrow-minded men incapable of understanding his ardent, imaginative character, or of conceiving how he could toil and struggle as he did for years in this one cause without some personal incentive to such wonderful exertions, seem to us ridiculous or insufficient to account for his conduct. It is said, for example, that his animosity arose out of some slight which Hastings had shown to his relation, William Burke, in India, many years ago. We can believe that William Burke may have received some rebuff from Hastings, who could occasionally depart from his habitual artificial suavity; we can believe that the orator, whose affections were all warm and impetuous, would resent this, and even, unconsciously, allow the circumstance some influence in his mind when he came to form his opinions of Hastings's public conduct; but what we can never believe is, that this family pique was the real cause of the present prosecution. Others have asserted that the whole thing was a mere party business, and that Burke was impelled by a bitter remembrance of the fate of Mr. Fox's bill and the fall of the coalition, which he attributed to the East India interest, at whose head Hastings was now to be considered; but his hostility to the governor-general had begun in 1781, two years before the coalition between Fox and Lord North was thought of, and more than two years before Fox's India bill was introduced; and this animosity to Hastings continued as strong as ever when Burke had quarrelled with Fox and taken his seat on the treasury bench between Pitt and Dundas. As a secondary motive, however, these feelings, no doubt, had, at this time, some effect, for Burke certainly attributed both the downfall of the coalition ministry and Pitt's triumphant majority at the next general election to the East India interest and the gigantic bribery exercised by Paul Benfield and his agent Atkinson. Others, again, have fancied that his imagination was captivated by the vastness, the grandeur, and comparative novelty of the subject; that he took it up as a great poet would his theme, and clung to it and transfused the soul of his genius into it, as the subject of all others best suited to his powers, or fullest of oratorical inspiration. This, too, may go as an additional incentive, as a minor motive—and the springs of all human actions have many such—though not as the *primum mobile*, for, like all great orators, Burke had the imagination of a poet, with something of that oriental twist which has been noticed in several of his distinguished countrymen; and he had read, studied, and dwelt upon India, its scenes and affairs, with intense interest, and for many years. The Indian field, as he called it, had occupied his thoughts so long, that it might be called *his own* field. Every man who really knew Burke was convinced of his enthusiastic sincerity in this cause. "I feel strong," said he, "only in the goodness of my cause." Pitt recommended a calm dispassionate investigation; but this was impossible, for Burke was incapable of it, and, though it was not a mere party question with him, it was evidently nothing more with many who voted on his side of the House, and who had made up their minds before a tittle of evidence was produced. But by this time doubts began to be entertained as to the real intentions or wishes of the premier, and sundry old political stagers, like Rigby, predicted *that ministers would abandon Hastings at some subsequent stage of the prosecution*. Several motives might lead to this abandonment. As Burke's eloquence roused the attention of the country, the alleged criminal could not be openly protected without some damage to the ministerial character; Pitt was little likely, where his interests were not concerned, to incur such an odium for any man, and as for Hastings, there had never been any friendship between them. The premier, though he could always com-

mand a majority of about two to one, could not always escape unhurt from the fierce attacks of the opposition, with Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Wyndham, and all the best orators of the House, at their head; and he might very well see, with satisfaction, some of these incessant attacks turned from him, to fall upon the great nabob. He must have known that the war, once begun, would last a long time, and would absorb the attention of Burke, with a great deal of denunciatory eloquence which must otherwise fall on his own head and the heads of his colleagues. It has even been assumed that Pitt was jealous of the great court favour shown to the ex-governor-general, and apprehensive of his being elevated to the peerage and a place in his majesty's council. The young prime minister could certainly have nothing to fear from a man, who had passed his whole life in India, and who was inexperienced and even strangely ignorant in home politics; but the case perhaps might, in some degree, be different with his friend Dundas, who had got the management of Indian affairs, and was most anxious to keep it. Neither Pitt nor Dundas, however, could at any one moment have coolly contemplated proceeding to extremities against a man whose services were so highly appreciated by the king. At the same time, the Lord Chancellor Thurlow was the resolute friend and advocate of the party accused. The two great lawyers of the day had changed sides and views from motives which will never be sought for in rigid honesty and conviction: thirteen years before, when the Commons were engaged against the hero of Plassey, Thurlow was the bitterest assailant, and Wedderburn the warmest defender and chosen champion, of Lord Clive; and now Thurlow was the champion of Hastings, and Wedderburn one of his bitterest foes. The whole interest of the court of directors, with all the votes they could command in the Commons, were on the side of the accused; and, though these were not powerful or numerous enough to shake the huge ministerial majority, they were sufficiently important to make the minister feel their loss if they should settle into a constant ill-will or opposition against him. Several vacillations that occurred in the course of the proceedings will explain themselves, or will be easily understood by a reference to the various agencies and motives at work in different directions, and at times counteracting each other. Having procured an enormous heap of papers, though far from all he asked for, Burke, on the 3rd of April, proposed calling to the bar some of the gentlemen who had been ordered to attend as witnesses. He was opposed on this occasion by all the crown lawyers, who had previously complained of his method of collecting evidence before bringing forward any specific accusations. They now represented that he ought to produce his charges first, and that no proofs ought to be admitted except such as were strictly applicable to the charges. This was the mode of proceeding in the courts of law, which, in the opinion of the crown lawyers, ought to regulate the proceedings of the House of Commons. Burke and his friends, on the other hand, represented that the House had already adopted a different mode of proceeding—had granted the power of taking evidence, had formed itself into a committee to receive evidence, and had summoned the witnesses, who were then waiting to be called in. They accused the lawyers of a design to cover the guilty by restricting evidence; but the lawyers were backed by the ministerial majority, and carried their point.

## CHAPTER XXI.

On the 4th of April Burke, in his place, charged Warren Hastings, Esq., late governor-general of Bengal, &c., with sundry high crimes and misdemeanors, and delivered at the table nine of his articles of charge. In the course of the following week he presented twelve more articles. The principal subjects of these were—the Rohilla war; the affairs of Benares; the depriving the Mogul of Corah and Allahabad, and of his tribute from Bengal; the various transactions in Oude, with the treatment of the Begums, &c.; the Mahratta war and the Mahratta peace; the internal administration of Bengal and the administration of justice; the death of Nuncomar and the hard treatment of Mohammed Reza Khan; disobedience of orders; extravagant expenditure; the enriching of dependants and favourites, and the acceptance by the governor-general himself of enormous presents or bribes. On the 6th of May another charge, being the *twenty-second*, was added to the list: it related solely to the treatment of Fyzoola Khan, the Rohilla chief. But before this last article was presented, Hastings, by petition, requested to be heard at the bar of the House in his own defence, and to be allowed a copy of the several articles of charge. Both requests or demands were granted, though Fox loudly inveighed against granting copies of the articles.

On the 1st of May, the day appointed for him, Hastings came to the House, which was crowded to see him. One of the members present says: "His entrance excited a strong and a general emotion. It was to me a painful spectacle to behold a man who during twelve years had governed the rich and extensive provinces of Asia, from the mouths of the Ganges almost to Delhi, and who, without a metaphor, might be said to have occupied the throne of Timur, now, when his period of life seemed to demand repose, and when he might have anticipated honours or rewards, dragged before a popular assembly, there to defend himself against impeachment. His person, if not dignified, was interesting, and his look commanding, as if accustomed to power."* He laboured under great and manifest disadvantages both in the manner in which he appeared in the House and in the mode in which he delivered his defence. Clive and Rumbold, as members of the House, had been enabled to reply from their places to their accusers; he, having no place in the House, was obliged to take his station where men rarely appeared except to be censured and browbeaten by the Speaker. Clive was an admirable speaker, and Rumbold no mean debater; but Hastings, more a man of the pen, untrained to any debating or speaking except at a council-board, with closed doors, and with only three or four to hear him, was no parliamentary orator, and never attempted to make himself one. He had written his defence, and he was to read it like a dry sermon, and that to an assembly whose ears and eyes were accustomed to the almost nightly displays of men who, whatever else they were or were not, were assuredly great masters of eloquence. The effect could not be otherwise than cold and flat. The exposition of his case might be, and was, skilfully and clearly drawn up, but the auditory were wholly unaccustomed to have expositions *read* to them. Being called to the bar, he was allowed a chair; and Mr. Markham (a son of the Archbishop of York), who had formerly been his resident at Benares, where he had performed the duty of putting Cheyte Sing under arrest, was allowed to attend on him for

* Sir N. Wraxall, Posthumous Memoirs of his own time.

the purpose of supplying him with the documents or papers he might want while reading his defence. After a very short speech, in acknowledgment of the indulgence the House showed in hearing him at that early stage of the prosecution, he sat down, opened his manuscript, and began to read. Like Clive, he referred to the votes of thanks, and the entire approbation of his conduct, received from his employers, the court of directors. He also referred to his indisputable popularity in India. "I left Bengal," said he, "followed by the loudest proofs of universal gratitude; and since I landed in England I have had the unanimous thanks of the court of directors for my services of five-and-thirty years. Furnished with such proofs of the approbation of those for whose benefit I had conducted the affairs of India, it did not occur to my mind that any other person could urge an accusation against me. Much less did I conceive that high crimes and misdemeanors could be alleged in this House as grounds for my impeachment before the Peers. Doubtless in the course of my administration I have committed many errors; but I have endeavoured so to conduct the government of India that it might prove beneficial to the Company at home, while it diffused repose and felicity abroad." He said that he was conscious that by standing forward as he was doing he might furnish proofs of his own misconduct; that, however, he was willing to disclose the facts and measures that took place while he held the first office in Bengal, whatever personal disadvantages might accrue therefrom. After taking a general view of the accusations, he began to read separate answers to each of the charges. But by this time he had read himself hoarse, and he felt exhausted. Mr. Markham, therefore, came to his assistance, and made the matter still colder and flatter, by reading a composition not his own, and in defence of another person. When more than five hours had been thus employed, and when so many members had been read out, that the House, from a very full one, had become almost empty, Pitt moved an adjournment. Two more days dragged heavily on in the same manner; and at the request of Hastings his defence was ordered to be laid upon the table of the House, and printed for the use of the members. He ought to have begun with this request, instead of ending with it; he ought never to have attempted trying the patience of that assembly with the reading; for, after hearing the long defence, or parts of it, most members would consider themselves exonerated from the task of perusing it afterwards in print. From various circumstances, one might be led to believe that Hastings had left his shrewdness and his wits behind him at Calcutta, or that, after developing themselves and growing to maturity under the bright and fervid sky of India, they were affected by English clouds and fogs. It is true, indeed, that he had gone to India a mere stripling; that he had passed his youth and the best of his manhood out of England; it is quite certain that the management of affairs in India by council-minutes, dispatches, and correspondence, and the management of affairs in England by parliaments, debates, and the nice balancing of parties, with a free press in the one case, and no press at all in the other, are two very different things; yet it might have been expected that a man with a sagacity and genius that had triumphed over many new and unforeseen difficulties, and that had led him through many a labyrinth in the East, would not have been long in hitting upon the right path at home. It is evident, however, that what was said of him was correct; that, having passed his best years out of his native country, he knew London and Parliament only by description, and that, having trained himself thoroughly to one system, which was in good part of his own creating, he was slow in catching the step of movements new to him, and regulated by numerous and independent agencies.

On the 1st of June Burke brought forward the first charge—the Rohilla war. The House was pretty full at the usual hour of business, but he intreated a pause for a few minutes; wishing, he said, that the members present might be proportionate to the importance of the matter. When he saw that the benches were crowded, he rose, and, with more oratori-

cal form than would please the present times, he began his speech by a solemn invocation to British justice. He solemnly disclaimed any personal motive or any private malevolence. "My anger," said he, "is not a private, but a public resentment. Not all the political changes of administration which we have witnessed during the last five years—neither summer retirement nor winter occupation, nor the snow which nature has plentifully showered on my head during that period—none of these has had power to cool the anger which, as a public man, I feel, but which in my individual capacity I never have nourished for a single instant." He drew a vivid but certainly over-poetical picture of the character and condition of the Rohillas previous to the invasion of the troops of the Nabob of Oude and the Company; and, with a bold flight of imagination, he described that race as having been annihilated; the fact being, that, after the one battle, the Rohillas, as far as life was concerned, suffered little or nothing, retreating with a good face to the foe, and then retiring with their wives and families to seek some other settlement with the same strong arm with which they had settled themselves in Rohilcund some forty years before. The other inhabitants of the country, who out-numbered them at about the rate of twenty-five to one, who were anxious for their expulsion, and who preferred the government of the Nabob of Oude—though they had afterwards no cause to congratulate themselves on their choice or preference—were, as we have stated, the real sufferers by the barbarities of the nabob's troops; it was their houses Colonel Champion saw burning,—it was their pleasant villages and well-cultivated fields, their women and children, that he attempted to save (not less from his own feelings than from the feelings and express commands of the governor-general) from the insane fury of Sujah Dowlah; but upon this class Burke neither in his article of charge nor in his speech lavished any sympathy. At the time the arrangements were entered into with Sujah Dowlah the power of making peace and war with "the infidels in India" was still in the Company, subject to no control of the British ministry. Hastings had, indeed, proceeded without orders even from the Company; but the Company wanted money; he got them forty lacs of rupees, besides freeing them from the expense of maintaining a considerable part of their troops, and, after some of their ordinary vacillations, quibbles, and contradictions, they approved and sanctioned all that had been done. In truth, their approbation was given to this Rohilla war the moment they accepted the money for which Hastings had entered upon it. We cannot help thinking that this was one of the weakest of all the charges. The reason why Burke placed it in the van of his battle was evidently this: Dundas in one of his resolutions had strongly condemned the war in Rohilcund, and he must either abide by that former opinion or incur the imputation of inconsistency. This was urged with all the powers of rhetoric. The treasurer of the navy and arbiter of Indian affairs was not disconcerted. "I admit," said he, "that these animadversions seem to be warranted by my conduct in 1782; but, though I then moved for Mr. Hastings's recall, I did it solely on grounds of expediency, and not with the slightest intention of instituting criminal proceedings." He acknowledged that he did not even now approve either the justice or the policy of the Rohilla war. "It must, however, be recollected," said he, "that since that period Mr. Hastings has been appointed by act of parliament governor-general of Bengal. I consider his appointment as a tacit, if not avowed, pardon for acts which preceded it. Subsequently he has rendered the most splendid services to his country. An impeachment, therefore, at this distance of time, upon this article, would be unreasonable, and injurious to our interests in the East." Pitt did not open his lips; but when the division came, he voted with Dundas. But that division was still far off. The debate lasted till half-past three o'clock in the morning; and, being renewed on the following evening, it did not terminate till half-past seven o'clock on the morning of the 3rd of June. In this debate a first appearance was made by a young man who came into the House with a brilliant

reputation from Eton and the university. This was Lord Mornington, afterwards the Marquess Wellesley, who was destined to fill, only twelve years later, the place which Hastings had occupied in India. He spoke ably in defence of the late governor-general, and joined the master of the rolls in making severe reflections on Lord North, who, though he did not vote, spoke against Hastings and the Rohilla war, which he had winked at when it happened. The queen's solicitor-general, who again took a strong and even violent part against Hastings, admitted that, though every other individual present should join against that gentleman, the noble lord in the blue ribbon must vote for his acquittal on the actual charge. Poor North, indeed, whose spirits were depressed, and whose wit or humour was damped by the fast approaches of a terrible calamity—total blindness—was assailed almost as much Hastings. And there seemed some ground for these attacks, as, though he now condemned the Rohilla war as deserving impeachment, he had, after that war, and between the years 1774 and 1781, while at the head of the government, allowed Hastings to be thrice named by parliament Governor of Bengal. In his defence, North said that he had endeavoured to procure by means of the court of directors —the only means that could then have been legally employed—his immediate recall; and that his endeavours were defeated by the court of East Indian proprietors, who insisted that Hastings should be continued. These facts could not be disputed, but they could be conveniently forgotten by his assailants. Public political memory is even a more treacherous thing than private memory. Nothing so easy as to forget and confound events and circumstances, or to make other men forget and confound them. Thus, many members in the House would be altogether oblivious as to the difference between the controlling powers of ministers at two different epochs, and might fancy that the power now vested in ministers by Pitt's India bill was not greater than that which had been possessed by Lord North, and that therefore his lordship might have recalled Hastings if he had chosen, which certainly was not the case. North withdrew before the question was put from the chair; but this might proceed more from illness and weariness than from any other cause. When debates lasted till half-past seven in the morning, there was seldom a very numerous attendance at the division. On the present occasion there had been nearly a full House when Burke began his grand but too long speech; but from 200 to 300 members were wearied out and went home to their beds before he got to the end of it. Hastings's now printed defence was harshly criticised both by Burke and by Hardinge. The queen's lawyer said—"I see in it a perfect character, drawn by the culprit himself; and that character is his own. Conscious triumph in the ability and success of all his measures pervades every sentence. Not a crime remains. All is talent conducted by wisdom and virtue." Francis gratified his revenge by a terrible speech. He was listened to with great attention, as he had been six years in India, and was supposed to know the subject thoroughly; but there was that in his history, in his Indian adventures, and in his personal and deadly animosity against Hastings, which ought to have detracted from the weight and value of everything he said. Wyndham, Wilbraham, Powis, Anstruther, Michael Angelo Taylor, and many others, including Fox, the greatest of them, spoke on the same side: on the other side Dundas was supported by Lord Mornington, Lord Mulgrave, William Grenville, Burton, Scott, and many others, including Wilberforce, whose clear and melodious voice was always listened to with pleasure, and with the greater attention from the notion that he very often took his cue from the premier.*

When the division, long and clamorously called for from every part of the House, did at length take place, Burke's

* In the spring of the present year we find Wilberforce, though "an altered man," and visiting the bishops to concert with them the establishment of an association for the discouragement of vice, saying in his Diary—"Though I had told Pitt that I could not promise him unqualified support, *I was surprised to find how generally we agreed.*"

motion, declaring that there was ground for charging Warren Hastings, &c. with high crimes and misdemeanors on the matter of the Rohilla war, was negatived by a majority of fifty-two, the numbers being 119 against 67. The friends of Hastings hailed the result as a triumph; and, if they did not expect that the whole proceeding would be quashed at once, they confidently anticipated that the next charge would undergo a like defeat, and that Burke would then give up the prosecution in despair. The talk in clubs and drawing-rooms was, that the king's estimation of Warren Hastings would soon be seen in his elevation to the peerage, and in his introduction to his majesty's privy council, and a seat at the board of control, from which he would again regulate the empire in the East. Nay, the gossips *par excellence*, those men that whisper in corners with mysterious and portentous looks, denoting that they know a great deal more than they choose to tell, even affirmed that the title was chosen and the patent all but ready—that Hastings was to take his title from the seat of his ancestors—that he was to be Baron Daylesford. And there was far better foundation for these reports than club-house gossips usually trade upon. It was certain that the only obstacle to the peerage was the censure of the House of Commons; it was known that Lord Thurlow had expressed his contempt for this objection even before Burke's failure in the Rohilla charge, and had told the chancellor of the exchequer that, if he was afraid of the Commons and their recorded votes and resolutions, there was nothing to prevent him (Thurlow) as lord chancellor and keeper of the great seal from obeying the king's pleasure about a peerage patent. There were still, however, some heads shaken in the manner of Lord Burleigh; there were still some doubts expressed whether it would suit Dundas to have Hastings at the board of control, or whether it would square with the calculating policy of Pitt to persevere in crushing Burke's charges, and thereby bring odious popular charges upon himself; for the nation was roused, and, though the people might not understand the complicated business, they were quite capable of being excited by Burke's eloquence, and by the pictures he had drawn and would still draw of cruelty and oppression. And, in effect, the fair prospects of the late governor-general were soon overcast. On the 13th of June, immediately after the Whitsuntide recess, Fox brought forward the second article of charge; namely, the treatment of Cheyte Sing, Prince or Zemindar of Benares. The attendance fell short of the numbers present at the preceding debate; but there was still a pretty full House, and a great anxiety to hear what side the premier would take on this occasion. Some were of opinion that, with the single exception of Dundas, none of the individuals on the treasury bench knew, at the moment when the debate began, how the chancellor of the exchequer would vote, or what sentiments he would deliver. This anxiety, however, was soon removed, for Pitt, who had sat silent during the previous discussion, rose at an early stage of the debate, after Fox and Francis had spoken. He declared that he had attentively studied the whole subject, and that he had come to the conclusion that the governor-general was fully justified in calling on Cheyte Sing for aid, both in money and in men; that he was equally justified in imposing fines when that assistance was contumaciously withheld; and, finally, that the conduct of the governor-general, his firmness, decision, and vast resources of mind, during all the dangers of the insurrection, called for the highest admiration and praise. With a commanding flow of words, he accused Burke and Fox both of oratorical exaggeration and of party misrepresentation; but the bitterest part of his speech was reserved for the bitter Francis, who had seconded the present motion. Pitt reprobated the malignant spirit of that ex-member of the supreme council, questioned the rectitude of his character, and censured his conduct, both in India and in that House, as being as dishonest as it was malignant. But the ears of the friends of Hastings had scarcely drunk in these pleasant sounds ere the premier filled them with much less welcome notes. Having made up his mind to a middle course, to a miserable compromise, not between right and wrong, but between

what he considered as expedient and profitable, and what the country considered as wrong, Pitt went on to say that, though Hastings unquestionably had the right of demanding aid and imposing fines, he *thought* that the fines he had imposed were too great in amount, and his behaviour too severe on the occasion. It appears that these words dropped from him hesitatingly, and with a look that seemed to say he would blush, if his hard, stiff face were capable of blushing; but that he afterwards added, with a little more energy—"The fine imposed on Cheyte Sing was exorbitant, unjust, tyrannical. I therefore shall agree to the motion before the House. But I confine myself solely to the *exorbitancy* of the fine, approving every preceding as well as subsequent part of the late governor-general's conduct throughout the whole of that transaction."* This was all the argument he used to reconcile his numerous followers and retainers who had gone down to vote for Hastings, but must now trim their sails for a different tack, and vote against him. The great flock were ready to follow the great bell-wether; but there were men who could not so easily reconcile their inclinations and their consciences. Pitt's own near relative, Mr. William Grenville, his bosom friend and *protégé*, Arden, attorney-general, and Lord Mulgrave, who were seated near the minister, protested that they must differ from him; that, as honest men, they could not think Hastings deserving of impeachment on this charge, or concur in the vote. There was murmuring and whispering in some other parts of the ministerial benches. Wilberforce, who, with all his humanity, believed that the conduct of Hastings was in part justifiable and in part excusable, and who had been taught so to believe by his friend Pitt—for his own thoughts at the time were more engaged about a scheme for putting down vice by means of bishops and royal proclamations, than about the affairs of India—was evidently puzzled and confused. Pitt, quitting his seat, sat for some time by Wilberforce's side explaining his unexpected conduct, justifying it on scruples of conscience which he knew would have their weight on his conscientious and devout friend, and very earnestly declaring that this business of Benares was *too bad*, and that he had found it impossible to stand any longer by Hastings. He succeeded in convincing Wilberforce of the sincerity and purity of his motives;*

* Hastings, in a letter to a friend in India, written a few days after this debate, says—"You will hear from others what justice I have received. With ministry and opposition both united against me, I have been declared guilty of a *high* crime and misdemeanor, in having *intended* to exact a fine too large for the offence—the offence being admitted to merit a fine—from Cheyte Sing. This has given consequence to my accuser, who was sinking into infamy, and had every reason to expect punishment for the baseness and falsehoods of his charges against me. It is new to me to see a criminal prosecution hang over a man's head the length of a chancery suit, in a land where the laws will not permit the jury to sleep ever a trial for murder."—*Letter dated 18th of July*, 1786, *as given by Gleig, Life.*

* We glean these particulars from Mr. Macaulay, who, we divine, has had family sources of information and ample means of hearing Mr. Wilberforce's sentiments from his own lips. He says that that good man used often to relate the events of this remarkable night, and describe the amazement of the House at Pitt's unexpected conduct. The sons of Mr. Wilberforce and the authors and editors of his Life and Correspondence seldom deign to notice such profane matters. It would be difficult to find in any other case seven long volumes (there are five of the Life and two of the Letters), relating to a public man, so destitute of information about public affairs. In opening the Life at this particular point we find quotations from Mr. Wilberforce's diary like these:—"Oh, give me a new heart, and put a right spirit within me, that I may keep thy statutes and do them."—"Near three hours going to and seeing Albion Mill. Did not think of God."—"Meditation: What shall I do to be saved?"—"23rd. Thought too faintly. Meditation: Heart deceitful above all things.—"25th. I this day received the sacrament."—Things proper for Mr. Wilberforce to note in private memoranda, but neither proper nor profitable to others, and which we scarcely think he himself would ever have consented to publish. A great part of the Life is made up out of these disjointed notes. In looking into the Correspondence we do not find one syllable about the Benares charge and his friend Pitt's conduct upon it. The shortest note, struck off at the moment, would have been interesting. At the end of the Life, among two or three scanty reminiscences, we find the following without date—"Oh, how little justice was done to Pitt on

but in the minds of other men the course he took continued to be accounted for in a very different manner, and few but those who were sold body and soul to the minister had the face to deny that his conduct, if nothing worse, was mean and evasive. Even Major Scott was listened to when he reprobated the paltry quibbling, and said that the minister, after acknowledging the transcendant services of Hastings, was now abandoning him to his enemies, on account, as he said, of the quantum of a fine, levied, not from any corrupt motive, *but for the public service, in a moment of danger and distress.* Dempster, a Scotch member and country gentleman, who had usually voted with the party of Fox and Burke, maintained that Hastings had been the saviour of our possessions in the East; and that the only fault he had committed was in returning to this country with a very limited fortune. Dundas, to whom unfavourable suspicions attached, perhaps more closely even than to Pitt, never opened his lips during the debate—but when the division came, he voted with the premier. That division affords a curious index to the state of conscience of the House of Commons. Exactly the same numbers—119—that had acquitted Hastings on the Rohilla charge voted him guilty on this Benares charge, the minority voting in his favour being 79. According to the calculation of a member who voted in the minority, full fifty individuals followed the voice and signal of Pitt, without conviction, examination, or hesitation. "Every first minister of England," says this worthy member, who is neither so dull nor quite so incorrect as he has been represented, "must be able to rely on such a phalanx, who ask no questions: such is necessarily the genius of our government and constitution in practice, though not in theory."* The friends of Hastings, all the members representing the India interest, who had been accustomed to give a general support to the administration, and who on some other questions had been just as subservient to Pitt, exclaimed against the baseness of those who had followed him on this occasion, and attributed to the premier and to Dundas the selfish motives which others suspected them of; that is to say, they accused the head of the government and the head of the board of control of a jealousy and fear of the late governor-general. This was Hastings's own conviction, and he never afterwards forgave Pitt. We confess, however, that we must continue to doubt the correctness of the notion, at least in as far as relates to the premier, who, though his ruling passion might be the avarice of power, could scarcely feel either fear or jealousy of Hastings. Our doubt scarcely extends to Dundas. We also admit that, if Hastings's violent advocate Thurlow—a man, seemingly, violent in everything—really acted in the way he is said to have done, and had hinted that Hastings might have a peerage without the interference of the chancellor of the exchequer, Pitt may have been actuated by rage and indignation at what he would certainly consider an encroachment on his rights and province as premier. This greatest of peer-makers never could bear a peer to be made except at his own selection and recommendation. This, indeed, had long been an established part of official prerogative; but perhaps no prime minister had ever guarded it so jealously

Warren Hastings's business! People were asking what could make Pitt support him on this point and on that, as if he was acting from political motives; whereas he was always weighing in every particular whether Hastings had exceeded the discretionary power lodged in him. I well remember—I could swear to it now—Pitt listening most attentively to some facts which were coming out either in the first or second case. He beckoned me over, and went with me behind the chair, and said, 'Does not this look very ill to you?' 'Very bad, indeed.' He then returned to his place, and made his speech, giving up Hastings's case. He paid as much impartial attention to it as if he were a juryman."

* Sir N. W. Wraxall, Posthumous Memoirs. The baronet, however, seems to confess that, in a case like the present, where the House assumed a judicial capacity, and where the character, the fortune, and it might be even the life of an eminent man were concerned, "more severe scruples might have directed their votes." "These reflections," he continues, "derive strength, if we consider that the far greater number of those who divided with Pitt were men of high birth and independent fortunes, though not, it may be thought, of independent minds."

as Pitt. The worst impression, however, remained; and Hastings's friends did not content themselves with entertaining it in secret. Out of doors, both publicly and privately, they attributed the conduct of the premier to motives of the basest jealousy; they declared it was in the full confidence of his protection and support that they had urged Burke to bring forward the charges with which he had been so long menacing the governor-general; and that it was in this confidence that their friend had been persuaded to come to the bar of the Commons with a hasty and premature defence.*

On the 14th of June, the very day after the decision of the Commons on the Benares charge, Hastings presented to his majesty a splendid diamond, sent by the Nizam of the Deccan. It is said that the Nizam had transmitted the precious jewel to Calcutta; that it did not arrive there until after Hastings had quitted the Ganges; that the packet containing the diamond was sent after the governor-general by the first good ship; that it did not reach him till the 2nd of June, when the Rohilla charge was pending; that a variety of casual circumstances had hindered the presentation to the king till the 14th; and that it was then presented by Lord Sydney at a levee, at which Hastings was present. It was also said that the bulse, or purse, beside the diamond of great size and value, contained a letter from the Nizam to his majesty, which clearly showed that the present proceeded from the spontaneous generosity of the Indian prince, and that the late governor-general had nothing whatever to do in the affair except as having been chosen as the proper channel for the transmission of the present. All this might be perfectly true, but the diamond was nevertheless presented at an unlucky moment. Two nights after, when Major Scott was calling the attention of the House to some alarming circumstances in Bengal, and to some suspicious preparations making in the Mauritius by the French, Sheridan said that the only extraordinary news that he had heard of was the arrival of an extraordinary large diamond, said to have been presented to his majesty at an extraordinary and critical period, and—which was also extraordinary—presented by an individual charged, by that House, with high crimes and misdemeanors! Scott harangued, explained, and read letters in confirmation of his assertions, but to little purpose. The caricaturists, pamphleteers, newswriters, song-writers, and epigram-makers of the day caught up the story, and by the united means of their various arts spread it rapidly over town and country. The "mysterious diamonds," meant to check "the impending vote," were put into smart satires and decent verses by the authors of the Rolliad, and into coarser

* Ann. Regist. *In* a letter written many years after, and only four months before his death, Hastings tells Mr. E. B. Impey, the son of his old friend Sir Elijah, that he will give him "a well-attested anecdote," and then adds:—"Previous to the day on which the article of Benares was debated, the ministerial members had received instructions to give their votes against it. *At an early hour of that morning Mr. Dundas called on Mr. Pitt, awoke him from his sleep, and engaged him in a contest of three hours' duration, which ended in an inversion of the ministerial instructions, of which it was my chance to be apprised the same morning.*" The inversion of the word of command to the ministerial members is quite certain, and was made evident in the debate, and in some conversation across the table after the division. It was this that caused the amazement and awakened the scruples of Mr. Wilberforce. From this passage in one of the last letters Hastings ever wrote, it should appear that he firmly believed that in this matter Dundas had led Pitt, and not Pitt Dundas. Hastings states repeatedly that he was all along looking to a seat at the board of control, and to the principal management of Indian affairs, as a proper reward for his past services. Now, Dundas was the last man in the world to bear any brother near his throne, or to be over-scrupulous as to the means to be employed to extinguish so dangerous a rival as Hastings.

From pride and perhaps from some better motives, or it might be also from a conviction that his trouble would be thrown away, as he had little money and no patronage, the ex-governor-general did not try to make a party in the House of Commons. He says:—"I have not solicited, nor will I, the interest of a single member of the House, and after what has passed am indifferent about the issue, provided only it be speedy. It hurts me, I own, to be tried by judges who vote with their party in a judicial as they do in a political question; yet people talk of it as a thing of course. In the mean time my prosecutors (for they are many, and they are also my judges) fill the papers with the most wicked lies to influence the public against me, and my friends tell me that I must not give myself any concern about them; *yet everybody believes every calumny so uttered, if they do not affect themselves, their friends, and connexions.*"—*Letter, dated 18th July*, 1786.

verses by authors of less repute. The *diamonds* were sung about the streets and stuck up in the printsellers' windows. The Nizam's unit was multiplied *ad infinitum*—there was no end to the diamonds! One ingenious caricaturist represented on one side of his picture the king on his knees, with his mouth wide open, and on the other Warren Hastings pitching diamonds into his majesty's opened mouth. Another artist represented the king with crown and sceptre huddled in a wheelbarrow, and Hastings wheeling him off, with a label from his mouth saying, "What a man buys he may sell." Luckily for the droll who made the hit, and money by it, there chanced to be exhibiting in town a man that pretended to masticate and digest the hardest stones, and the walls of London were placarded with invitations to the curious, headed, "The Great Stone-Eater." The king was drawn with a diamond between his teeth, and a heap of diamonds before him, and underneath was written, "The Greatest Stone-Eater."

The proceedings against Hastings went no further this session.

## CHAPTER XXII.

In the mean time Burke had not been idle with his impeachment. On the very first day of the session he gave notice that he should renew proceedings on the 1st of February, 1787. The 1st and the 2nd of February were spent in examining Mr. Middleton, late resident at Lucknow, and Sir Elijah Impey, late chief justice at Calcutta, who were ingeniously tormented for the purpose of extracting from them evidence against Hastings. On the 7th of February the third charge of the impeachment was opened by Sheridan, as Burke had opened the first, and Fox the second. This third charge related to the treatment of the Begums, or princesses, of Oude, and was obviously more susceptible of rhetorical ornaments and strong appeals to the feelings, and at the same time required less accurate knowledge and less business detail, than the preceding charges. It was, no doubt, for these and other good reasons that the subject was allotted to this fanciful and brilliant orator. Sheridan, according to his own private confession, knew little or nothing about India and its affairs; but then there was Francis, who knew a great deal, locally and practically; there was Fox, who had acquired a fund of information by the pleasant medium of conversation; and there was Burke, who knew everything by reading and intense study; and by these gentlemen and others Sheridan was crammed for the great occasion. We mean no disrespect to the genius and eloquence of the most fascinating orator of his day—we merely mean that Sheridan was idle and negligent, and did not enter upon the subject of the crimes of Hastings, or the sufferings of the Indians, with a solemn conviction like Burke's. Parts of the speech which he now delivered were as witty and sparkling as any passages in his own comedies; parts rose to the tone of lofty poetry; parts were filled with a pathos that went to the hearts even of those who knew that the orator was doing little more than playing a part; and some portions were considered as the very perfection of manly eloquence. We cannot judge of the effect produced upon the audience merely by a dry reading of imperfect fragments, for the most part, it may be presumed, not very faithfully reported; but an immensity of concurrent evidence seems to prove that the impression produced was altogether wonderful. As a matter of course, Sheridan treated the whole matter merely as an orator, and never permitted facts, or doubts, or the delicate dread of going too far and saying too much against the party accused, to check one flight of his imagination. But, viewing this speech as a work of art—and no rational man will ever again consider it in any other *light*—and judging by the report, which was more likely to leave out than to put in, we should conceive that the display was injured and weakened by this excess of fanciful decoration; and both in the witty and the pathetic parts there were lamentable proofs of false, bad taste, and of a thorough artificiality. Still, however, as a whole, it must have been an extraordinary performance. Burke declared that it was the most astonishing effort of eloquence of which there was any record or tradition. Fox said that all that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it dwindled into nothing;* and

* This was said out aloud, and with due solemnity, in the course of the present debate. It has been mentioned, however, that Fox, in the course of the same night, expressed his astonishment at the pathetical and horrible parts of the oration, and at the orator's assumed fury, saying, *sotto voce*, "This might be all very well from Burke, but from Sheridan it *does* look *a little* like acting!"

We do not doubt that Fox admired the speech as a work of art, though his taste must have objected to many parts of it. "When Fox was

Wyndham, another accomplished orator and most competent critic, spoke of it, many years after, in terms equally enthusiastic. The main scope and object was to paint the darkest deeds with which the name of Hastings was connected in the darkest and most appalling colours—to give a grand crescendo of iniquity and horror—not to sift accusations, but to enforce credit for them all, and embody them all at the end in one mighty mass of atrocity. Several curious stories are told as to the way in which he transported and whirled his auditors along with him. One of the best is that related of Logan, the author of the exquisite little Ode to the Cuckoo, who had abandoned or been expelled his calling as a minister of the church of Scotland, and who had forsaken poetry to become a hack writer, a hired political pamphleteer, in London, taking any side that paid best, and all sides in turns. This Logan, who is said to have written just before a masterly defence of Hastings, was in the gallery this evening, prepossessed for the accused and against the accuser. At the end of the first hour of Sheridan's speech he said to a friend near him, "All this is declamation without proof:" when the second hour was finished he said, "This is a most wonderful oration:" later he said, "Mr. Hastings has acted very unjustifiably:" later still, "Hastings is a most atrocious criminal:" and at the end of all, "Of all monsters of iniquity, the most enormous is Warren Hastings." We have our doubts as to the perfect authenticity of this anecdote, because, from what we know of Logan's character and manner of living at the time, we think it extremely probable that, if he had written for Warren Hastings on one day, he had written against him on the next, and that therefore he had no strong prepossession either way when he went into the House; but we can very well believe that effects similar to those neatly described in the story were really produced upon many minds by Sheridan's grand oratorical feat. And yet again, after all, there must have been something theatrical in the speech and in the orator's manner—something that acted upon the minds of the audience in a very different manner from the solemn earnestness of Burke, and the unstudied, gushing vehemence of Fox. Thus, when he sat down, all, or nearly all, in the crowded House—members, right and left, peers and strangers—joined in a tumult of applause, and kept up a loud and long clapping of hands as if they had been in a theatre. Such a mode of expressing their approbation was indeed new, irregular, and indecorous, in that place. A cry of "encore" would have completed the illusion, converting for a moment St. Stephen's Chapel into Drury Lane. The speech occupied considerably more than five hours in the delivery. According to a member present, who meant a compliment and no sarcasm—"in many parts and passages it was absolutely dramatic; not less so than the 'Duenna' or the 'School for Scandal.' . . . . He led captive his audience, of whom a large proportion was very incapable of discriminating truth from misrepresentation or exaggeration. The very scene of these transactions, which lay in Asia, on the banks of the Ganges or the Jumna; the personages who performed the principal parts—viziers, princesses, eunuchs, and rajahs; zenanas and harems entered by violence; jaghires arbitrarily resumed and treasures seized on by military force; all these accessories, when decorated with the charm of oratory, subdued his hearers and left them in breathless admiration, accompanied or followed by conviction."* Of the imperfect fragments—the bits picked here and there—which seem to be all that remain in type or in pen-and-ink, of this marvellous performance, there is one particular passage which has been cited as being so strongly marked with the characteristics

asked what he thought the best speech he had ever heard, he replied, 'Sheridan's on the impeachment of Hastings, in the House of Commons (not that in Westminster Hall).' When asked what he thought of his own speech on the breaking out of the war, Fox replied, 'That was a d—d good speech too.' I heard this from Lord Holland."—*Lord Byron's Diary.*

* Sir N. Wraxall, Posthumous Memoirs. Nicholls, who was also present at the debate, and voted on the same side as Wraxall (*i. e.* against this impeachment in all its stages), says, soberly—"I did not admire this speech. . . . Mr. Sheridan's speech was not calculated to inform, but to mislead his hearers."—*Recollections.*

of Sheridan's talent, as to be entitled to be looked upon as a pretty faithful representation of what he spoke.* In our opinion it is also to be considered as a specimen of his artificiality and of the unbounded licence of his tongue. In the last particular he did not exceed Burke;† but there was this difference between them—Burke really felt what he said, and Sheridan only acted. The feelings of Burke were so intense, and his conviction of the late governor-general's deep guilt so entire, that he would not have stayed in the same room with Hastings; but Sheridan, if the opportunity had offered, would have sat down amicably with Hastings over a bottle of wine, charming him by his wit, as he did every one else, and being charmed by the nabob's mild and most gentlemanly manners, as was almost every one that closely approached Warren Hastings. Many persons, in the House and out of it, had confessed that the late governor-general must in several instances have exceeded his authority, and that some of his actions, as at Benares, Chunar, and Lucknow, could only be excused by the facts that all that he had done had been for a great object—for the salvation of British India—and that, like a high-minded man, he had sought no money, no jaghires, no advantages of any kind for himself. Confining his view to a narrow part of these arguments, Sheridan said—"To estimate the solidity of such a defence, it would be sufficient merely to consider in what consisted this prepossessing distinction, this captivating characteristic of greatness of mind. Is it not solely to be traced in great actions directed to great ends? In them, and them alone, we are to search for true estimable magnanimity. To them only can we justly affix the splendid title, and honours of real greatness. There was indeed another species of greatness, which displayed itself in boldly conceiving a bad measure, and undauntedly pursuing it to its accomplishment. But had Mr. Hastings the merit of exhibiting either of these descriptions of greatness,—even the latter? He saw nothing great—nothing magnanimous—nothing open—nothing direct in his measures or in his mind. On the contrary, he had too often pursued the worst objects by the worst means. His course was an eternal deviation from rectitude. He either tyrannised or deceived; and was by turns a Dionysius and a Scapin. As well might the writhing obliquity of the serpent be compared to the swift directness of the arrow, as the duplicity of Mr. Hastings's ambition to the simple steadiness of genuine magnanimity. In his mind all was shuffling, ambiguous, dark, insidious, and little; nothing simple, nothing unmixed; all, affected plainness, and actual dissimulation; a heterogeneous mass of contradictory qualities; with nothing great but his crimes, and even those contrasted by the littleness of his motives, which at once denoted both his baseness and meanness, and marked *him for* a traitor and a trickster. Nay, in his style and writing there was the same mixture of vicious contrarieties; the most grovelling ideas were conveyed in the most inflated language, giving mock consequence to low cavils, and uttering quibbles in heroics: so that his compositions disgusted the mind's taste, as much as his actions excited the soul's abhorrence. Indeed, this mixture of character seemed, by some unaccountable but inherent quality, to be appropriated, though in inferior degrees, to everything that concerned his employers. He remembered to have heard an honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Dundas) remark that there was something in the first frame and constitution of the Company which extended the sordid principles of their origin over all their successive operations; connecting with their civil policy, and even with their boldest achievements, the meanness of a pedlar and the profligacy of pirates; alike in the political and the military line could be observed *auctioneering ambassadors* and *trading generals;* and thus we saw a revolution brought about by *affidavits;* an army employed in *executing an arrest;* a town besieged on *a note of hand;* a prince dethroned for the *balance of an ac-*

* T. Moore, Life of Sheridan.

† It was not in Hastings's manner to indulge in that kind of revenge, but his injudicious champion, Major Scott, certainly gave back Burke the hard words he applied to the late governor-general with interest. For example, the major calls Burke "that infamous scoundrel;" "that reptile, Mr. Burke," &c.

*count*. Thus it was they exhibited a government which united the mock majesty of a bloody sceptre and the little *traffic of a merchant's counting-house*, wielding a truncheon with one hand, and *picking a pocket with the other*." Against Sir Elijah Impey Sheridan ran on still more riotously. He called him "the Oriental Grotius," and described him as "degrading the dignity of his high office, laying aside the character of a judge, and soiling the ermine by condescending to execute the functions of a pettifogging attorney; running up and down the country ferreting out affidavits, and carrying them upon his shoulders in a bundle, like a pedlar with his pack." Nor was Middleton, the resident at Lucknow, more gently treated by the orator. He was made to figure in fifty antitheses, some horrible and some ludicrous. "In the prosecution of the Begums," said Sheridan, "an army was sent to execute an arrest, a siege was undertaken for a note of hand, and a rebellion was proved by affidavit. There was a trading general, an auctioneer ambassador, and a chief-judge notary!" When the House had done clapping and applauding, one of the friends of Mr. Hastings—Sir William Dolben—attempted to speak, but, finding he could hardly obtain the least attention, he sat down again. Sir William or some other friend observed that the House was exhausted by the long excitement of the wonderful speech; and that it would be proper to adjourn before coming to any opinion, or hearing any other oration, which must appear flat and dull in the comparison. This was also the opinion of Pitt; but Fox, who wanted a division while the feelings of the House were still responding to the magic of the enchanter, reminded gentlemen that it was *only* midnight. "It is obvious," said he, "that the speech just delivered has made no ordinary impression; and I see no reason why we may not come to the question. If any friend of Mr. Hastings should wish to attempt effacing the impression, this appears to be the proper time for doing it." Major Scott, with consummate imprudence, after declaring that he could convict Sheridan of many gross misrepresentations of facts, professed his willingness to proceed if such should be the pleasure of the House. But Pitt interposed; —"A more able speech," said he, "has perhaps never been pronounced. But I can by no means agree that, because one dazzling display of oratory has been exhibited, other gentlemen ought to be precluded from giving their opinions. For these reasons, I, for one, wish for an immediate adjournment." And accordingly, at about one o'clock in the morning, the House adjourned. On the morrow the debate was resumed by Francis, who, though not a fluent speaker, was very capable of giving strong Junius touches in a case into which he had thrown all the earnestness and bitterness of his nature. Major Scott responded with his usual length, and with more than his usual ability. He contrasted the calamities and disgraces sustained nearly everywhere else during the war with Hastings's acquisitions of territory in the East. He asked the members of the present opposition why, if they considered the treatment of the Begums so criminal, they had not recalled the governor-general in 1783, when they were themselves in office. He affirmed that the affidavits taken by Sir Elijah Impey, and other good testimony, fully proved that the Princesses of Oude had taken part in the insurrection of Benares, and had actually raised troops with intent to support Cheyte Sing. He depictured the critical situation of our affairs in the East between the month of October, 1780, and the beginning of the year 1783—Hyder Ali and the French at the gates of Madras, the French fleet cruising on the Coromandel coast, Sir Eyre Coote looking solely to the governor-general for the means of paying his army, on which depended the fate of India, the Bengal treasury empty, the very money for the Company's annual investments in native produce and manufactures all appropriated to the war, and all spent, loans raised among the seits, or native bankers, until they could lend no more, money borrowed in every direction, and yet the troops, both European and native, left with their pay many months in arrear. "One fact," concluded Scott, "no man can doubt; namely, that the sum procured from the Princesses of Oude could not have been

raised from any other source. And without that supply, we might now have been debating here, how Mr. Hastings should be impeached—not for saving, but for losing India." This speech, and particularly the last argument in it, were calculated to make a deep impression; but on one side of the House the opposition were pledged to support Burke's view of the case, and on the other the ministerialists awaited the nod of the minister. Fine arguments and splendid oratory produced their effects, and were no doubt of use, out of doors, but within the walls of that House they rarely carried a dozen votes one way or the other, unless they were accompanied by other influences. The great fugleman did not leave his majority long in doubt: Pitt rose to speak—all eyes were fixed upon him—but seldom did he make so equivocating and mean an appearance. After a few commonplaces and the assertion that he had compared the charge minutely with the evidence, he said he was now ready to concur with the motion, that he thought himself bound to vote with the honourable gentleman who had brought in the charge! But he begged to draw a distinction: the resumption of the Begums' jaghires was in his opinion a measure which might in certain situations have been justifiable, though certainly it was a measure that came awkwardly from the Company, who had guaranteed the treaty securing the Bhow Begum in her estates: but the seizure of the Begums' treasure, being unsupported by law, and not called for by any state necessity (there was as much law in the one case as in the other, and state necessity was with Hastings equally the motive in both), he thought it impossible not to condemn it: and in his opinion the crime was greatly aggravated by making the nabob the instrument of it, by setting the son to rob the mother. Pitt further said that the offence was aggravated by Hastings's conduct in stifling the orders of the court of directors, which expressly commanded a revision of the proceedings against those princesses. But the minister did not take into account that revision without restitution would be a mockery—did not intimate that the directors had been altogether mute on the trying matter of restitution, and had quietly winked at the disobeying of their order in the matter of investigation—did not hint that, long before the paper from Leadenhall-street reached India, the money was gone, and could not be restored (the jaghires, as we have seen, were restored)—did not speak out manfully and inform the House that the treasures of Fyzabad had been employed and spent in supporting the war against the French and the Mysoreans, and that, though guilt had been contracted in getting at the money, India had been saved. Sheridan and Fox joined in applauding the minister's delicate sense of justice; and when Hastings's friends attempted to renew the argument, they were coughed down, or interrupted by cries of "Question!" "Question!" It was observed, however, that several members of administration looked blank and disappointed; neither Pitt's relative, W. Grenville, nor Lord Mulgrave, neither the attorney-general nor the master of the rolls, uttered a syllable: the solicitor-general spoke, but it was only to declare that he never could agree to an impeachment, and that therefore he should not vote on the pending question. Upon a division, Sheridan's proposition was carried by 175 against 68.

On the 19th of February Burke called the attention of the House to the present state of the prosecution, which, he said, was attended with many awkward circumstances, arising out of their having originally departed from the usual course of proceeding in matters of that nature. Perhaps the *deliberate caution* with which they had proceeded might be attended with some advantages; but he thought now, that, having solemnly determined upon two charges of atrocious delinquency, there was quite ground enough for drawing up the impeachment, and that the sooner they resorted to a vote of impeachment the better. Upon such vote proper steps might be taken for preventing the party impeached from quitting the kingdom, removing his property, alienating any sums of money, or taking any other steps to evade the ends of justice. There was, he said, a little circumstance that rendered such a step very necessary: another gentleman from India,

deeply implicated in Mr. Hastings's transactions, and against whom proceedings of a serious nature would soon be instituted, had, within a short time, sold out of the public funds property to the amount of 50,000*l.* The person here referred to was Sir Elijah Impey. But Major Scott, thinking that Burke had been speaking of property belonging to Mr. Hastings, got up to assure the House that he had no concern in it, and to declare that he believed that Mr. Hastings's whole fortune did not at that moment much exceed 50,000*l.* Pitt would not enter into Burke's hurry, and so it was resolved that the proceedings should continue to move on according to the rule of "deliberate caution." On the following day, the House being in committee on the charges, Dundas said that, as intimation had been given that a charge of a serious nature would be brought forward against Sir Elijah Impey, he would suggest to those concerned in the prosecution that it would be inconsistent with the justice, the candour, and the benevolence of that House, to call and examine a gentleman as a witness at their bar, and then to make his evidence the ground of future crimination against him. Sir Gilbert Elliot, who had taken the case of Sir Elijah into his own hands, replied that, though he had determined to move for an impeachment against Sir Elijah Impey, yet the House could not think of waiving the advantage of any information it could possibly obtain. He said the subject of Impey's present examination would not exactly come within the limits of his intended charge, although that charge would go to affect nearly the whole of the conduct of Sir Elijah, who, by his extra-official interference, had had a share in some of the most guilty of Hastings's transactions. Burke, in still stronger language, insisted that the evidence of the chief justice ought to be taken, even though he was himself to be charged afterwards. He said that the prosecution could not think to lose the advantage of the testimony of that person who had been "the principal confidant of the principal culprit." Pitt agreed that the testimony of Sir Elijah was very important; but he thought that delicacy and propriety demanded that the witness should have such notice of the charge intended against him as might tend to put him on his guard. Burke hereupon moved—"That Sir Elijah Impey be called in, and that the chairman be instructed to inform him that it is possible that a criminal inquiry may be instituted against himself, on the ground of extra-official interference and his general conduct in India; and that the subject on which he is now to be examined may lead to proceedings connected with such an inquiry." This motion being carried, Sir Elijah was called in. The chairman gave him the notice according to the vote; and then Sir Elijah said—"that, as he was conscious of no guilt, and as there was no part of his conduct which he could wish to secrete, this notice could make no difference in his wishes to give the committee the fullest information." The Chief Justice of Bengal then underwent a long examination touching some affairs with the Nabob of Furruckabad.

On the 2nd day of March the fourth charge against Hastings was opened by Mr. T. Pelham. It comprised what was termed the corrupt and oppressive conduct of the governor-general towards the Nabob of Furruckabad. Major Scott replied to Pelham, and the debate was very dry. Dundas rose and diverted the attention of the House to the breach of the treaty of Chunar. He spoke with a great show of candour and moderation; he said that the treaty, after all, might have been only a *bad way* of doing *a good thing;* he advised the gentleman who had brought forward the present charge to reflect whether it would be worth while to prosecute it to the other House, as it appeared not likely, even if substantiated, to add much either to the guilt or the punishment of the late governor-general, while it would certainly require a vast volume of evidence to prove it. Dundas, however, concluded with saying that, unless he should receive satisfaction on some points of the business, he must certainly give his vote for the question. On this day the cause of Hastings met with support from a new quarter, and so high an opinion was entertained of the merits of this new advocate, and of the weight of his argu-

ments, that it was fancied at the time that, if he had appeared at an earlier stage of the proceedings, he might have stopped them altogether; as it was, it served only to draw from Pitt declarations which left Hastings no other hope than that of an acquittal in Westminster Hall.* This new advocate was that veteran sailor Lord Hood, who had maintained the honour of the British flag in the last war. Though unaccustomed to speak in Parliament, and though strongly attached to Pitt, he rose to remonstrate with ministers. He considered the whole matter like a man accustomed to war, and to the difficulties that often arise even in regular service—like one who knew that a state of war is a suspension of law. He implored the House to reflect on the consequences that must result to the state, if, with too scrupulous accuracy, they called to a severe account the individuals who had filled important stations abroad in periods of hostility and perplexity. Certain actions, which appeared to those at a distance, and uninformed of many of the circumstances, in a very criminal light, might, on a nearer investigation, prove perfectly justifiable on the grounds of absolute necessity. With honest simplicity the admiral stated the difficulties in which he had often been placed himself, and the summary, irregular acts—or they might be called acts of oppression and unauthorised violence—which he had himself been obliged to adopt, to subsist the British fleet in the West Indies during the last war, when all our islands there were threatened by French, Spaniards, and Americans. "Those acts," said he, "were indispensable to the preservation of my ships and men; yet, if the government had not stood between me and legal prosecutions, I should in all probability have been condemned to linger out the remainder of my days in prison. The example now set by the House of Commons in prosecuting Mr. Hastings will for ever stand before our future commanders, and create a great and dangerous clog to the public service. I am an old man: at my time of life I can entertain no expectation of being again employed on active foreign service; but I speak for those who are to come after me. My regard for my country makes me anxious to prevent a precedent by which all her services for the future would be greatly impeded; this I am confident will be the effect of punishing any harsh and severe, but perhaps necessary, stretches of power which the saviour of India may have been found to have committed." Pitt, working himself up to a high pitch of morality, rose to reply to the old admiral, and to declare that he must ever prefer what was right to what might be expedient. He said that he should have been satisfied by giving a silent vote for the question before the House, but that, after what had fallen from the noble lord, he felt himself called upon to answer the argument used, lest the weight of his lordship's authority on such subjects might mislead the judgment of the committee. As he proceeded he somewhat qualified his rigid morality. If a servant of the public, civil or military, should carry his exertions beyond the line of strict right, and even of necessity, God forbid that he or any man should deny him his due merit, or say that the abundance of his zeal ought not to be allowed as an atonement for the irregularity of his actions and the error of his judgment! But he asked whether that part of the conduct of Mr. Hastings now before the House corresponded to any such principle?—Whether the crime that day alleged against him was justified by his motive or by necessity?—Whether any existing necessity could justify a crime of such a size and complexion? He represented, that, wherever a departure was made from justice and right, it was not sufficient to *say* that such a step was necessary, for the party must *prove* the necessity, which in this instance, in his opinion, had not been done. Upon a division Mr. Pelham's motion was carried by 111 against 50.

On the 15th of March the charge relating to abuses, for selfish purposes, in contracts and salaries, was opened by Sir James Erskine,* nephew to Lord Loughborough. Sir James endeavoured to show

* Ann. Regis.

* The late Earl of Rosslyn.

that Hastings had made both corrupt and improvident bargains for providing bullocks, elephants, &c.; that he had grossly favoured individuals that were devoted to his will and useful in his designs, at the expense of his employers, and that he had been guilty of abuses in the opium contracts. Major Scott said he could prove that Hastings had never profited by these contracts, though perhaps Francis, and certainly his friends, had; and he instanced the case of one Mr. Tighman, who was a relation of Francis, and who had returned to Europe in the same ship with him a wealthy man, made rich by opium profits. Pitt said that the present charge might be divided into three distinct parts. As to the first, regarding contracts, &c., he thought some of the matters alleged too insignificant to be discussed in parliament or inserted in articles of impeachment; but he would except two contracts, one for bullocks in the year 1779, and the opium contract in 1781; in both of which there appeared to him circumstances of criminality and ground for suspecting corruption. As to the second article, which related to the extraordinary emoluments bestowed by the governor-general on Sir Eyre Coote, in disobedience of the Company's orders, and imposing the payment of those additional emoluments on Cheyte Sing, he thought it highly criminal, and proper to be inserted in the articles of impeachment. As to the third part of the charge, or that relating to profuse expenditure in the civil department, he considered it too trivial, or not sufficiently supported by proof, to be admitted into a solemn criminal charge. Pitt next inflicted, in the way of caution and advice, some stinging reproofs on the managers of the prosecution, who seemed likely to absorb an immense deal of the time of the House. He thought that all who had any regard to the dignity of parliament, or to the ends of substantial justice, must wish to forward the business as much as possible, and bring it before the Peers in the best shape. He conceived that it was by no means the best way to clog it with useless, unnecessary, and unprovable matter. The best thing the House could do was to strip it of all such matter; and he wished the right honourable gentleman (Burke) who had taken so active a part in the business would, on some early day, ascertain and determine on such charges as he still intended to bring forward; as there were many charges already before the House which, he was certain, could never be proved, or, if they could, were not of sufficient criminality to warrant the present mode of proceeding. In the end he moved to leave out everything in this article of charge except what related to the bullocks and Sir Eyre Coote. But Burke, unwilling to drop a single item, moved an amendment on the minister's amendment, giving up one or two trivial points, but insisting on the insertion of others which Pitt would have rejected, and which certainly deserved rejection. Yet, upon these trifles, Burke found himself in the rare condition of being in the majority against Pitt.* The tiresome minutiæ had thinned the House, and when the original question, or the motion made by Erskine, that this charge contained matter for impeaching, &c., was put to the vote, there were not above eighty-six members to divide, of whom sixty voted for, and twenty-six against the motion. It is admitted, even by those who have most severely sifted the conduct of Hastings, that all the particulars which Pitt tried to eject were either frivolous in their nature or incapable of proof. The contract for bullocks for the service of several armies in the field was scarcely entitled to more regard, and quite as unsusceptible of any proof that the business had not been managed in the best way that circumstances permitted. As to the additional emoluments granted to Sir Eyre Coote, they had been granted in order to induce him, in old age and in very bad health, to undertake the chief command of the army in India in a time of war. Hastings naturally looked to Coote as the officer who enjoyed the highest reputation in India, as a veteran commander who knew well the country in which he had gathered his laurels and served so many years, as a commander singularly endeared to the native troops†,

* A Majority *of nine.*

† "Among the native soldiers Coote's name

as one whose name and prestige, experience, abilities, and bravery seemed to promise the best result. Coote unfortunately was fond of money; and it was only by a splendid offering of rupees and pagodas that the governor-general could hope to tempt him to forego his ease, neglect the cares necessary to his health, and quit his honourable retirement in England to enter into a war which had been infamously mismanaged everywhere, and the toils and anxieties of which killed him before he could see an end to it. Several passages in Hastings's private letters prove how anxious he was for the services of the general, and how anxious the general was for the rupees; while they also prove—what no general officer in the House of Commons, or anywhere else, could have doubted — that there ought to be a difference between the pay of a general-in-chief residing at Calcutta and doing nothing but routine business, and a general-in-chief in the field, with expenses, that are in India enormous, for staffs, attendants of all kinds, camp equipages, elephants, horses, camels, bullocks, scouts, messengers, secret services of all kinds, &c. &c. In a letter to Sulivan, Hastings says, "I hope my conduct will receive your support. General Claverring, who never intended to take the field, might content himself with a gratuitous salary of 60,000 rupees per annum, but you must be convinced that the commander-in-chief could not possibly support the indispensable charges of his rank and command with so scanty a sum; and *it is a dangerous maxim to connive at unauthorised perquisites, the inevitable consequence of too close an economy.* . . . . These acts have all passed with opposition from Messrs. Francis and Wheler, and will no doubt be represented in the worst colours in their private letters to England—*by Francis at least.*" The governor-general had not the power of appointing the commander-in-chief; that rested with the court of directors at home: but it seems very doubtful whether Sir Eyre Coote would have gone out again to India, if Hastings had not allured him with brilliant promises of emolument, of the unreserved surrender of the whole military department, and of other concessions. In an earlier letter written to Sulivan, before the general's arrival, Hastings says, "*He shall have all he wants, and more than he probably expects.* I only fear the aptitude of his easy temper to yield to the incendiary impressions of Francis."* Being then, as always, in furious opposition to the governor-general, Francis assumed that the additional emoluments conferred on Coote were given only to secure his vote and support in council,—for Sir Eyre returned to India a member of the supreme council, as well as commander-in-chief. Though fond of money, Sir Eyre Coote was too honourable a man to make any such bargain; and it appears from his conduct in council that, so far from voting constantly with Hastings, he frequently opposed him, though he would never join Francis, whom he hated and despised, in his systematic and constant opposition. Not long after his arrival at Calcutta, Coote took the field, and marched into Oude, the frontiers of which were threatened by a Mahratta army. The Nabob of Oude—or Nabob Vizier, as he is commonly called—was charged with all the extra allowances, expenses, &c. fixed by Hastings for the general. The court of directors, in a letter dated the 18th of October, ordered that the nabob should be relieved of these charges—as Coote had recrossed the Caramnassa, and returned into the Company's own territory—and that the extra allowances should be discontinued altogether; but long before this letter could reach India—indeed just *five days* after it was written in London—Coote

was great, and his influence unrivalled; nor is he yet forgotten by them. Now and then a white-bearded old sepoy may still be found who loves to talk of Porto Novo and Pollilore. It is but a short time since one of those aged men came to present a memorial to an English officer who holds one of the highest employments in India; a print of Coote hung in the room; the veteran recognised at once that face and figure which he had not seen for more than half a century, and, forgetting his salam to the living halted, drew himself up, lifted his hand, and with solemn reverence paid his military obeisance to the dead." —Mr. Macaulay, in *Edin. Rev.* and *Essays, Critical, Historical,* &c.

* Letter in Gleig's Life of Hastings.

had been induced to take his departure for Madras, in order to assume, in person, the management of the war in the Carnatic. This he was not bound to do either by the Company or by the king's government; and the state of his health would have been a sufficient excuse if he even had been bound by orders. As the general's expenses would be still further increased, Hastings, to keep him in good humour, had given or promised him still more money. When the letter of the court of directors arrived, the veteran was contending on the Coromandel coast with Hyder and the French—and also with his maladies. Was it possible for the governor-general, under such circumstances, to reduce the extra allowances which the money-loving general had enjoyed? Would it have been wise to make any such experiment on Coote's temper? It was unjust, perhaps, or contrary to treaties with him, to make the Nabob of Oude pay these extra charges, when the general was not serving in Oude, but in the Carnatic; but Hastings had no other source from which he could so easily draw the money, and on the fate of the war in the Carnatic depended not merely the fate of the English in Bengal, but also the fate of their neighbour the Nabob of Oude himself.

On the 22nd of March a warm altercation took place in committee between Pitt and Francis. A Mr. Mercer having been called before the committee for examination on the subject of the opium contract, Francis, to whom the said Mercer had addressed a letter some time before full of the grossest abuse of Hastings, so managed the examination as to get the letter introduced and entered at full length on the minutes of the committee. Pitt, holding the letter in his hand as it appeared on the printed minutes, denounced what he described as the "unworthy artifice" by which Francis had contrived to render the House of Commons his accomplices in recording a libel. Francis, in reply, distinctly denied that the letter had been written at his instigation, and stated that, with respect to Mercer, he was not acquainted with him personally, nor had he ever been in his company till he saw him at the bar of the House. He wanted to ascertain whether Mercer knew anything about the opium, and had desired a friend to call upon him, upon which Mercer had written him the letter, which when he had read he was sorry to find so much of the contents irrelevant, but he was obliged to produce the whole letter or none at all, else he would have been charged with the suppression of evidence. Sheridan rebuked Pitt for giving way to indecorous anger. Pitt defended himself, and said that "no degree of indignation could be too strong, where the House itself had been made instrumental to an act of such palpable malice and injustice." Opium was a dangerous thing for Francis to handle at all, as it was more than suspected that a good part of the large fortune he had brought with him from India had been derived from a very profitable, very irregular, and (to him, as a member of the council) prohibited traffic in that drug; but Francis, in his eagerness for revenge, shrunk from no danger, was sensible to no scruple. When this altercation was over, Mr. Wyndham opened the sixth charge against Hastings for his conduct towards Fyzoola Khan, the Rohilla chief, who retained possession of Rampore, in Rohilcund. The eloquence and the nice metaphysics of Wyndham's speech were much admired; but he most decidedly misstated many of the facts and bearings of the case, persisting in the error which represented the Rohillas as a most amiable quiet people. Major Scott exposed some of these rhetorical and metaphysical errors. He denied the existence of the pretended grievances and hardships of the last of the Rohillas; he quoted facts and circumstances to prove that the treaty which allotted them a settlement in Rampore had been well observed; and he maintained that Fyzoola Khan was at that moment one of the happiest and most independent native princes of Hindustan. Scott asked whether the Khan had ever complained? whether the Begums themselves had ever complained? whether any complaint of any sort had been received from any of the native princes? The Rajah of Benares, who had been expelled for his rebellion, might

complain, though it did not appear he had intrusted his cause to the prosecutors of Hastings in the House of Commons. But what had the people of Benares done? They had erected temples to Mr. Hastings! To this last flourish of the major, Burke wittily replied, that in India people dedicated temples to two very different divinities, to the good principle and to the evil principle, or to the infernal power whose enmity and malignity they deprecated. Here Burke ought to have stopped; but he went on to spoil a good jest, by mixing in it a savage denunciation. "Perhaps," he added, "the temples in question may be temples of gratitude to the presiding divinities of Hindustan, for having removed a *monster* under whose tyranny the unfortunate natives suffered so many evils." Pitt took no part in this debate, leaving the ministerial signal to be given by Dundas, who, although he differed from Wyndham and Burke in some particulars, agreed with them that there was criminal matter, and that the charge ought to be included in the articles of impeachment. This was enough to secure the majority; and on a division Wyndham's motion was carried by 96 against 37. The House having resumed, the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to propose that a day should be named for bringing up the report of the committee on the several charges which had been admitted. He was ready to give such a vote on the general question of impeachment as would correspond with the part he had already taken; but he must observe that, having only partially acquiesced in some of the charges, he should endeavour to bring the matter before the House in such a way as would relieve him from the unpleasant alternative of being obliged either to dissent *in toto* from propositions to parts of which he wished to give his concurrence, or to vote for propositions which contained some circumstances to which he was adverse. But whether he should make a separate motion, or only move an amendment, he had not yet determined. Burke declared that he approved of the minister's proposition, and hoped that his arguments would convince the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the necessity of admitting the whole of the several propositions as they had been originally drawn. He also hoped that the minister and he would be found voting together on this important subject. In conclusion it was agreed that the report should be brought up on Monday, the 2nd of April. It appeared to some of the friends of Hastings that the House was now going to proceed at too rapid a pace. On the 27th Mr. Hamilton (commonly named Single-speech Hamilton) called for some delay, and expressed his abhorrence of a proposition, thrown out some weeks before by Burke, to secure Hastings's person and property as soon as the impeachment should be voted. "At present," said he, "I speak in terms of restrained indignation. If I had given way to my feelings on the first mention of that project, I could not have answered for my expressions." He protested against the proposed scheme of bringing up the report, and following up the reading of the report by impeachment, on one and the same evening. Hamilton was supported by Mr. Yorke (afterwards Lord Hardwicke). Pitt strongly condemned any proposal for delay. Burke said that the House ought to remember what kind of criminal they had to deal with. "Let those who accuse us of precipitation," exclaimed Burke, "remember how many years we have been occupied with inquiries into Mr. Hastings's conduct. And has he not himself, in that extraordinary performance read by him at our bar, and which he denominated his defence, demanded dispatch? The charges in which this House has already concurred are not simply high crimes and misdemeanors in the ordinary sense of the words;—they are acts at the bare mention of which our nature recoils with horror!" On the 2nd of April Sheridan opened the seventh charge, relating to the corrupt receiving of bribes and presents. The orator, who embellished his subject with all kinds of tropes and figures, imputed the grossest corruption and most ravenous greed for money to a man who had been singularly indifferent as to riches for his own use. "He is changeable," said Sheridan, "in every-

thing except in corruption;—there, and only there, he is systematic, methodical, immutable. His revenge is furious as a tempest or a tornado; but his corruption is a monsoon, a trade-wind blowing regularly from one quarter." In indulging his wit and his irony Sheridan gave vent to some sallies which admitted the real facts of the case—that Hastings had not received the presents for himself, but for the account and benefit of his employers—that the forced offerings went directly into the Company's treasury. In describing the accommodating morality of the court of directors, and their correspondence with the governor-general, he said it might be condensed in words like these—"Forasmuch as you have accepted presents, we highly disapprove of your conduct; but, inasmuch as you have applied them to the credit side of our account, we exceedingly approve your conduct." It was not meant; it was inadvertency; it proceeded from the natural impulse of the man to say all the witty things he could; but both in this speech and in his grander effort on the Begum charge, Sheridan uttered several things tending to exonerate Hastings and to inculpate the court of directors, who were indeed answerable for much that had been done amiss, and who could plead no set-off in the way of great and wise measures. Upon a division this seventh charge was carried by 165 against 54.

The House then resumed, and the report of the committee was brought up by the chairman, Mr. St. John. The question being put, "that it be now read the first time," Pitt declared that his anxiety increased at every step they advanced in this serious business, and that he earnestly desired all future proceedings should be entered upon cautiously and with due formality—that members would now deliver their votes singly and exclusively on the merits of the grand decisive question of impeachment, and free from any objections that might be taken to the manner in which that question should be brought forward. He therefore wished to know how Burke intended to proceed. For his own part he wished it to be understood that he only went to a certain length—that he could not join in a general vote of impeachment, which might seem to countenance the whole of each several charge. He thought that the most advisable method would be to refer all the charges to a committee, who might select out of them the really criminal matter, and frame it into articles of impeachment; and then, when these articles should be reported to the House, the question of impeachment might be moved. Fox, on the contrary, declared his opinion to be that the report now presented should be taken into immediate consideration; and that, if the House agreed to it, it should be immediately followed by the motion for impeaching the great criminal. This, he said, was agreeable to the ancient constitutional mode of impeachment. In his speech Fox thundered against any attempts at using the argument of a set-off, and against any attempts at delay. Burke said, that though he thought the proposition of Fox the more constitutional of the two, he conceived the difference to be trifling—too trifling to be allowed to break in upon that unanimity which now seemed to distinguish the proceedings of the House. The report was therefore turned over to a committee without any further struggle. On the following day Major Scott rose and said that there had been much talk about *setting off* the merits of Mr. Hastings against his supposed delinquencies: he begged leave to inform the House that neither Mr. Hastings nor his friends had the most distant idea of taking refuge in anything of the sort. He held a paper in his hand written by Mr. Hastings himself, and he begged permission to read it to the House as a part of his own speech. Having obtained the necessary permission, he read the paper, in which Hastings briefly and powerfully stated his own notions as to the procedure.* When this was over,

* Hastings's paper was to this effect:—"Though it might be deemed presumption in me to declare any wish or expectation concerning the mode in which the House of Commons may, in its wisdom or justice, determine to proceed in the prosecution of the inquiry into my conduct now depending before them; yet, as it has been reported that many gentlemen, members of that honourable assembly, who have not chosen to give their constant attendance on the committee holden on this business, have expressed their determination of

Burke moved the appointment of the committee to select the criminal matter out of the charges and embody it in an impeachment; and he proposed, as proper members for this committee, the following persons:—Himself, Edmund Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Sir James Erskine, T. Pelham, Wyndham, St. John, J. Anstruther, W. Adam, Michael Angelo Taylor, Welbore Ellis, F. Montague, Sir Grey Cooper, *Philip Francis*, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Dudley Long, Lord Maitland, Colonel North, General Burgoyne, and Mr. Grey. When the name of Francis was read in this list, there was a loud murmur of disapprobation, not unmixed with strong symptoms of disgust and indignation. There was no one in the House that could possibly be ignorant of the implacable hostility which Francis nourished against his late official superior; and there were few but knew that the great aim and object of Francis had been for years, whether contending in India or debating in the House of Commons, to secure to himself the envied post of governor-general! It was not now mentioned in the House that his ambition and avarice were seeking their gratification as well as his revenge; but it was objected strongly, and with proper English feeling, that, as in India he had been personally at variance with Hastings, he ought not to form part of the present committee. Yet, on a division being called for, the nomination of Francis was carried by 9$ against 44. On the 19th of April, Francis, in opening the eighth charge, relating to the management of the revenues of Bengal, took occasion to vindicate his character from what he termed certain malicious insinuations, and to which he attributed the attempt to reject his name from the committee. He maintained that his animosities were all of a public and not of a private nature; that even his duel had been fought upon a public cause of quarrel; and that when, shot through the body and fancying he must die, he gave his hand to Mr. Hastings, and declared he forgave him, he did not mean that he forgave him his public faults. This speech was poorly answered by Major Scott. Pitt rose, and, without noticing what Francis had said, spoke to the question before the House, stating that some of the matter contained in the present charge had found a place in articles already agreed to, and that other parts of the matter were either not criminal or not capable of proof. In the course of this debate Mr. Barwell, now member for St. Ives, who had been associated with Hastings in the government of Bengal, and who had invariably seconded the governor, rose to observe,

opposing the general question of impeachment when it shall be brought before the collective body of this House, I hope I may, without irregularity, or the imputation of disrespect, intimate my sense of such a determination, both as it may respect that question, and the claim which I conceive I possess to attendance on the question upon the report which, in the due order of business, will precede it. I presume that in the present examination of my public conduct there are two leading, and, as it appears to me, exclusive objects, of equal and reciprocal obligation—namely, that justice may be done to the nation in the redress or punishment of wrongs which it may be eventually proved that it has sustained by my acts; and that justice may be done to an individual who may be eventually proved to have been wronged by unfounded accusations, and who even thinks that he has a claim to the applause of his country for those very acts which have been drawn into crimination against him. If it shall be resolved by the honourable House of Commons to agree to the report of the committee, that is to say, if it shall be resolved that there is ground for impeaching me for high crimes and misdemeanors, on the charges on which the committee have already passed that decision. I presume that the resolution for the impeachment ought to follow of course, as the only means which can satisfy the justice of the nation in the supposition of my guilt, or clear my character in the supposition of my innocence. With regard to the first of these conclusions I have no claim; but for the last I may, in common with the meanest of the subjects of this realm, assert my right to the benefit and protection of its laws; and I trust that the honourable House of Commons, which has ever been considered as the guardian and protector of the laws, will not suffer my name to be branded with the foulest and blackest imputations upon their records, without allowing me at the same time the only legal means of effacing them, by transferring them for trial to the House of Peers in the form of an impeachment. To this opinion I humbly beg leave to add my request, and it is the only request or application which I have hitherto permitted myself to make to any of the individual members of the House on the process of this business, that, if it shall be resolved on the report that there is ground to charge me with high crimes and misdemeanors, they will afford me the benefit of their votes, though united with those of my prosecutors, that I may be brought to legal trial for the same.

"WARREN HASTINGS."

that, as an honourable gentleman had frequently introduced his name in that House, he could not avoid expressing an earnest desire that, if there was any charge against him, it might be brought forward, he being quite ready to meet it in that House or elsewhere. Burke, who was the person alluded to, replied, with a levity and sarcasm that ill suited so serious a subject, that he did not intend to bring forward a charge against the honourable member, as his hands were sufficiently full already; but, if he was really so anxious to be accused, he would, when at leisure, apply himself to the subject, being far from thinking the whole of the gentleman's conduct in India unexceptionable. Upon a division the charge, as presented by Francis, was admitted by 71 against 55.

On the 25th of April Burke brought up from the committee the articles of impeachment, which were forthwith read for the first time and ordered to be printed, and to be taken into consideration on the 9th of May. On the appointed 9th of May, upon the motion being made that the articles of impeachment should be read a second time, Admiral Lord Hood again rose to declare his strong feelings on the subject. He went over the same arguments he had used before; and he concluded by imploring the House to recollect that, whatever errors or faults the late governor-general had committed, he had indisputably saved the most valuable possessions of the empire. His lordship was followed by a very different man. This was none other than the ex-patriot and present chamberlain of the city of London, John Wilkes, who had almost entirely changed his politics, and who, together with his daughter, had contracted a very warm friendship and close intimacy with Mr. and Mrs. Hastings. During the two or three preceding sessions Wilkes had sat almost silent in the House; and it was thought that he was no longer capable of any ardent exertions. He now, however, made one of the most effective speeches that had been delivered on this subject. He insisted that many of the acts charged against Hastings were unsupported by any admissible evidence, that many were justifiable by state necessity, that others had been actually justified by the approbation of his masters and of the public, that others were defensible from the wide difference of manners and government in India from our own, and that others were not only justifiable, but highly meritorious. He found a proof of the innocence of Hastings, and of the wild exaggerations of his accusers, in the total silence of the natives of India upon the subject of the dreadful oppressions said to have been practised amongst them. He attributed the greatest part of what appeared criminal in the conduct of Mr. Hastings to the craving and avaricious policy of his employers, whose demands had in some instances driven Mr. Hastings to the use of means not strictly justifiable. The charges, supposing the facts to be true, amounted, he said, to this—that Mr. Hastings, by oppression, injustice, and corruption, had obtained for the Company nine millions and a half sterling! For himself, he thought that the principal acts, now converted into crimes, though the benefit of them was felt and actually enjoyed, were wise, politic, and just. But, were he of a contrary opinion, he could not, as an honest man, lay his hand upon his heart and vote for the impeachment of Mr. Hastings while he basely and infamously benefited by his misdeeds. And how gentlemen who condemned these acts could suffer a day to pass without moving retribution to the sufferers, was to him incomprehensible. "I am covered with astonishment," said he, "that a *faction* in this assembly should have been able to carry on the proceeding to the present point. I trust, for the honour of the nation, it will be terminated and finally extinguished by a very considerable majority before we adjourn this night." And he concluded by moving an amendment that the report should be read a second time that day three months. Wilkes was followed and supported by Nathaniel Smith, chief secretary to the court of directors, and by Alderman Townshend, who was no mean orator or debater. Islay Campbell, lord-advocate, took the same side, and reviewed the whole subject both as a lawyer and a statesman. He declared that, considering the House as sitting in the capacity of a grand jury, and consequently that

they ought to be thoroughly persuaded of the truth of the indictment, so far as the evidence went, and ought not to rest satisfied merely with remote probabilities, he could not conscientiously vote for the impeachment. He considered the necessities of the Company and the dangerous crisis of their affairs as grounds of justification for the strong measures pursued by Hastings in order to extricate them. He further observed that the late governor had been unjustly blamed for various acts of administration in which he had only concurred with others, or in which the members of the supreme council, untouched by this prosecution, had concurred and co-operated with him. He insisted that the order of dates and the state of the council ought to have been more distinctly attended to in the charges. Mr. Hastings, he said, had enjoyed the casting voice only for a very short time, and even then Mr. Barwell was equally responsible with him. Afterwards Mr. Wheler, Mr. Macpherson, Sir Eyre Coote, and Mr. Stables came one after another into the council. At one period there was a coalition between Mr. Hastings and Mr. Francis. How did the prosecutors account for this? Was Mr. Hastings alone to be made accountable during that curious period? He doubted, as a lawyer, whether, upon the supposition of guilt in any specific article, a set-off, or a balancing of accounts, could properly be admitted. But, at the same time, he contended that it was not altogether a new mode of defence. The proceedings in Lord Clive's case left no doubt that his lordship owed his safety to it. And there was a more ancient and illustrious example in the case of Epaminondas, the Theban general, who, being tried for his life for having kept the command of the army four months after he should, by law, have laid it down, confessed his crime, but enumerated the glorious actions he had performed with that army, and welcomed death if the sole merit of those deeds were ascribed to him. "This speech," said Campbell, "procured the acquittal of Epaminondas—and whoever reads the history of India during the late war, will be disposed to think that Mr. Hastings may die when he pleases with similar words in his mouth." The lord-advocate repeated the strong opinion of Wilkes as to the complicity of the East India Company. He said that, the Company having actually reaped the benefit of Hastings's acts, and so far approved of them as never to have signified any intention of restitution, he could not conceive with what propriety Hastings could be impeached singly for those acts. And, in solemn truth, if there was to be an impeachment at all, it ought to have included all those who had been members of the court of directors between the years 1771 and 1785. The whole list of delinquents would thus have included the names of many who were living and flourishing in health and reputation, and the names of some who were dead—men that had passed through life with the character of being eminent and virtuous citizens, excellent friends and neighbours, "highly respectable,"—who had had funeral sermons preached in their parish churches at their decease, and all the social and Christian virtues engraved upon their tombstones. Lord Mulgrave said that, as he had not been able to see any proof except on the charge relating to the accepting of the presents, he must vote against the impeachment. Mr. Burgess produced an address just received from the British officers commanding the army in India—an army that now amounted to 70,000 men—in which they all bore testimony to the excellent character, high abilities, and important services of the late governor-general. At a late hour Pitt rose to deliver his authoritative opinion. He began by remarking that Lord Hood, Wilkes, Islay Campbell, and Townshend had been again pleading a *set-off*. This was a ground which he expected and hoped would have been abandoned, after what had already passed upon that subject, both from Mr. Hastings himself, who had disclaimed any such plea, and from many of the gentlemen who had delivered their opinions in the debates on the several charges. For his own part, such was his opinion of many parts of the charges, and of their importance and criminality, that he could not conceive, if they were well founded, how the highest and the greatest

merits which had ever been alleged in favour of Mr. Hastings could be set in opposition to them as a plea even against conviction and punishment—much less against inquiry and trial, which were now the only objects in question. He thought that the House had gone too far to recede;—he felt himself at a loss to conceive how it could be reconciled to the honour, the consistency, or the justice of the House, to stop short of sending up the impeachment to the Lords. He attempted to defend the court of directors, and to separate their acts and instructions from the acts of the governor-general. He thought that, in one part of the Benares charge, there was criminality; and that in the case of the Begums there was a great deal more—and indeed he looked upon that charge as the most serious in the whole accusation. He could conceive a state, compelled by a sudden invasion and an unprovided army, laying violent hands on the property of its subjects: but then, in so doing, it ought to do it openly; it ought to avow the necessity, it ought to avow the seizure, and it ought unquestionably to make provision for a proper compensation as soon as that should become practicable. Mr. Hastings certainly had no right to impose a fine of any sort on the Princesses of Oude; for there was not sufficient proof of their disaffection or rebellion. And the fine imposed on Cheyte Sing, in a certain degree, though not to the same extent, was very blameable. After reviewing some of the other charges which had been admitted, he went on to say that, because others were guilty, Hastings ought not to escape punishment; for the having accomplices in his crimes was no exculpation, and it would be highly derogatory to the dignity of that House to say, "No, we will not bring the delinquent to justice, because there are many delinquents besides himself." Nor would this be a reason for impeaching the rest. It was by no means advisable to multiply examples: the proper way was to select such persons as, from their exalted and ostensible situations, were the more likely to serve as an effectual example. Upon the whole he concluded with declaring that the House could not otherwise consult their own honour, the duty they owed their country, and the ends of public justice, than by sending up the impeachment to the House of Lords."* He said not a word about restitution of the money to the Begums, or to any other party from whom money had been wrung; well knowing that such a proposition would meet with no favour. Mr. Martin, member for Tewkesbury, after avowing himself favourable to the impeachment of Hastings, said, that if any member would move for a restitution of the money, he would second him. But not a man rose. Major Scott said that, if he thought as the member for Tewkesbury did, he would not wait for any man to make such a motion, but would make it himself. "For," said the major, "the British House of Commons will become infamous to all posterity, the scoff and scorn of Europe, if, after impeaching Mr. Hastings for his pretended misdeeds, they basely profit by his crimes. He is accused of accumulating for the East India Company, by acts of oppression and injustice, nine millions and a half sterling. For every shilling of this ill-acquired sum credit has been taken by the minister (Dundas) who opened the Indian budget only two days ago! And, if the present charges are well founded, why do we not replace Cheyte Sing, who is now a fugitive, and repay him the lacs of pagodas which have been taken from him? Why do we not restore to the Nabob of Oude 150 lacs, due indeed by him to us, but of which we never could have obtained payment except by seizing on the treasures of the Begums? I think these acts wise, politic, and justifiable; but if I thought otherwise, I should consider myself as infamous as the corregidor in Gil Blas, who punished the robber for stealing a bag of doubloons, and, instead of restoring the money to its owner, applied it to his own use." Wilkes's amendment was negatived, and the second reading of the report was carried by 175 against 89. The first article of impeachment was then read, and agreed to without a division. The rest were deferred till the next day.

* Speeches of the Right Hon. W. Pitt in the House of Commons, edited (*rather badly*) by W. S. Hathaway.

When the House re-assembled (on the 10th) all the rest of the articles were agreed to with some trifling amendments; and then Burke rose and moved "That Warren Hastings, Esq., be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors upon the said articles." No one seemed disposed to make any further attempt to stem the torrent. At length, however, Mr. Sumner—usually a silent member—who had been in India in the Company's service, expressed his astonishment that a person of such high character, acknowledged ability, and rare indifference to money should be made the object of a prosecution carried on in that House with uncommon virulence—he was near saying with unexampled malice. He was regarded by the world at large as a great and wise politician, and as a statesman eminent for his activity and exertion. Such, he said, was the opinion entertained of the late governor-general in France;—indeed there was no place in any quarter of the globe that did not speak of him with raptures of admiration, except only the House of Commons, where he had been debased by joking phrases, run down by ribaldry, and loaded with invective fit only to be applied to the most atrocious criminal after conviction. Burke's motion was carried without any further debate, and without a division. Mr. F. Montague, one of the committee of managers, next moved—"That Mr. Burke, in the name of the House of Commons, and of all the Commons of Great Britain, do go to the bar of the House of Lords, and impeach Warren Hastings, Esq., late Governor-General of Bengal, of high crimes and misdemeanors, and do acquaint the Lords that the Commons will, with all convenient speed, exhibit articles against him, and make good the same." This too was agreed to without a division. And forthwith Burke, attended by the majority of the House, went up to the bar of the Lords and impeached Mr. Hastings with all proper form and solemnity.

On the next day, the 11th of May, Burke reported to the House what he had done at the bar of the Lords; and proposed that two solicitors (Messrs. Wallis and Troward) should be retained to act as solicitors for the impeachment on the part of the Commons. It was expected that here he would rest for the present session; but on the 21st, Burke remarked that it would be necessary, before the session ended, to take some steps for binding Mr. Hastings to be forthcoming whenever called upon; and he moved therefore, "That Warren Hastings, Esquire, be taken into the custody of the sergeant-at-arms of this House." Mr. John Nicholls, then a barrister on the western circuit (afterwards Dr. Nicholls, and a civilian of some note),* observed, that, upon referring to the journals in search of precedents, he found there were three different modes of proceeding. The first was to take the party impeached into the custody of their own sergeant-at-arms; the second was to desire the Lords to take him into custody; the third was to desire the Lords to put him to answer, *i.e.* to hold him to bail. He thought that the last mode ought to be adopted, as it would be extremely cruel to brand Mr. Hastings in the face of his country by suggesting that the House had reason to suspect him of a design of attempting to elude justice by flight. Pitt urged that the most regular and orderly mode would be for that House to take Mr. Hastings into custody by their sergeant, and to deliver him over to the Lords. Burke concurring, a motion to this effect was immediately agreed to. Very shortly after, the House was informed that Hastings was in the housekeeper's room, in custody of the sergeant-at-arms; and hereupon Burke was directed to acquaint the Lords with the same, and to intimate that the prisoner was ready to be delivered up to the gentleman-usher of the black rod whenever their lordships should think proper. The message being delivered by Burke to the Lords, Lord Walsingham moved that Hastings should be forthwith taken into custody of the black rod. This being agreed to, Sir Francis Molyneux, gentleman-usher of the black rod, received the orders of the House, and re-appeared at their Lordships' bar very soon after to

* Author of "Recollections and Reflections, Personal and Political, as connected with Public Affairs during the reign of George III.,"—a work we have repeatedly cited.

announce that the prisoner was in his custody. Black-rod was then ordered to bring the prisoner to the bar, which being done, and the late governor-general being upon his knees (for such was the rule), the lord chancellor directed him to rise, and ordered the articles of impeachment to be read over. After the clerk had read the long preamble to the charges, Hastings, knowing what a length they ran to, expressed a wish that the articles might be read *short*. The Duke of Richmond said he could not, upon such a solemn occasion, consent to this proposal; and the lord chancellor agreeing with his grace, the articles were ordered to be read at full length. They ought to have ordered in an additional supply of breath and strength for their clerk, who was not accustomed to such long readings. The reading began at half-past seven o'clock, and continued until ten, at which time the breathless clerk had got to the end of the sixth charge. Lord Townshend started up, and moved that the two remaining charges might be read short, in order to ease the House and the prisoner at the bar from the excessive weariness of such a long lecture. The Duke of Richmond opposed the motion. For some part of this time the late governor-general of India had been left standing at the bar; but, after some conversation, it was agreed to allow him the indulgence of a chair. As it was also agreed that the two remaining charges must be perused, the clerk resumed the reading, which was not finished till eleven o'clock. The lord chancellor then demanded of the prisoner what he had to say in his defence. "My lords," said Hastings, "I rely upon the justice of this House, and pray that I may be granted a copy of the charges, with a reasonable time to make my defence. Likewise that I may be allowed counsel, and that I may be admitted to bail." He was then led out of the House by black-rod. Lord Walsingham then moved that he should be admitted to bail, in the sum of 10,000*l.* himself, and two sureties in 5000*l.* each. The Duke of Norfolk declared that, considering the enormity of the charges, he could not agree to take such slender bail. His grace thought that the least sum which could be demanded was 50,000*l.*, and he moved to that effect. Lord Townshend seconded the noble duke's motion. Lord Chancellor Thurlow quoted the precedent of Sir John Bennet, who had been made to give bail in the sum of 40,000*l.* upon an impeachment. His lordship thought *excessive* bail both oppressive and illegal, and precedent the best thing to go by: he therefore moved that Hastings, like Sir John Bennet, should be admitted to bail, himself in 20,000*l.*, and two sureties in 10,000*l.* each; and this was agreed to. It being also agreed to grant the other request of the prisoner, black-rod was summoned, and ordered to bring him again to the bar. Hastings was led in, and knelt while the lord chancellor addressed him, and told him that the House allowed him one month, and until the second day of the next session of parliament, to make his defence; that they had admitted him to bail in 40,000*l.* as a security for his abiding the issue of process; that they had likewise allowed him counsel, and called upon him to name them. Hastings named as his counsel Messrs. Plomer, Law, and Dallas. He then offered as his sureties Messrs. Sulivan and Sumner; and, their recognizance being accepted, Hastings was ordered to withdraw. As the session was drawing rapidly to a close, the Commons agreed to some supplementary articles of charge without any debate. They were presented by Burke to the Lords on the 28th of May, and, Hastings being ordered to attend, they were read the same day, and copies of them ordered for his use. Sir Gilbert Elliot's motion for the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey was put off till the next session. On the 30th of May the king prorogued parliament.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

A FEW days before the Christmas holidays —on the 12th of December, 1787—Sir Gilbert Elliot made good his promise by presenting to the House six articles of charges of various high crimes and misdemeanors against Sir Elijah Impey, late chief justice of Bengal, &c. (It was only within the few previous weeks that the term *late* could be applied to the functions of this judge: Sir Elijah had not been deprived of his office in India—it had been said that he was even making preparations for his return to that country—but on the 10th of November preceding Elliot's motion he had acquainted the court of directors that his majesty *had been pleased to accept his resignation.*) Sir Gilbert Elliot, one of the most approved orators in the House of Commons, made a long and impressive speech, in which he professed to describe Impey's legal career from his first arrival at Calcutta down to his recall on a resolution of the House of Commons, provoked by his having accepted the second or Company's judgeship (the Sudder Dewannee Adaulut) from Hastings—an original complaint which occupied but a small part of the present oration, the chief objects now proposed being to couple Impey with Hastings in the guilt of the execution of Nuncomar, and of the Benares and Oude transactions. Deriving all his details from that very questionable letter which was said to have been written by the sheriff of Calcutta (Mr. Macrabie, the brother-in-law of Francis), immediately after the execution of Nuncomar in 1775, but which was never made public until now, and of which, as we have said, we can find no trace anywhere previously to its publication in Dodsley's 'Annual Register' for the year 1788, Sir Gilbert drew a very startling and affecting picture of the captivity, trial, demeanour, and execution of the Rajah Nuncomar.* A comparison between the said letter, which bears internal evidence of being written or retouched very largely by Francis himself, and this part of the long studied oration of Sir Gilbert Elliot, will convince the reader that the speech was founded solely upon the letter; and it appears that, except in this House of Commons speech and in this questionable letter, there is hardly any foundation for the pathetic narrative of Mr. Macaulay, the particulars of which are directly or indirectly contradicted by various contemporary accounts of the trial and execution, while some of them are inconsistent with the History of India and the condition of the native populations. If what is very doubtful, as well as what is absolutely false, be deducted from this pathetic narrative, very little that is either pathetic or picturesque will remain to adorn the tale. It is not true that Nuncomar was ignorant of the predicament in which he stood—it is not true that natives had never been executed for the crime of forgery—it is not true that the mode of executing by hanging was so peculiarly awful and horrible in the eyes of the Hindus, for hanging had been a not uncommon mode of putting criminals to death among the Hindus themselves—it is not true that the life of a Brahmin was regarded as sacred by the Hindus, let his crime be what it might, for Brahmins had been repeatedly executed by sentence of native courts—it is not true that Nuncomar was the head of the Hindu race and religion, or that his death excited among the Hindus the same feeling that a devout Catholic in the dark ages would have felt at seeing a prelate of the highest dignity sent to the gallows by a secular tribunal. If any such feeling had existed, the Hindus of Calcutta, who were very numerous, and in many instances exceedingly well informed that the majority of the council—Francis, Clavering, and

Monson — were at the moment more powerful than Hastings, would have signed a petition, as they had done in the case of Raddachund Mettre, who was, like Nuncomar, both an Hindu and a Brahmin. Nuncomar may have been of the highest caste, and a Brahmin of Brahmins; but men with these hereditary advantages or qualities neither were nor are secured against misfortune, poverty, obscurity, contempt; and then, as now, many Hindus of the highest caste occupied the lowest posts in society, filled the most menial offices, and lived and died in obscurity. When Nuncomar had possessed wealth and political power he was highly considered, but the consideration of his countrymen ended with his wealth and power. When one of the best informed and most respectable witnesses* upon Hastings's trial was asked whether the Rajah Nuncomar was not a very considerable person among the Hindus, he replied that he had been so at one time, but that he had ceased to be so long before his arrest. It is doubtful whether Nuncomar displayed in prison or on the scaffold the composure and resignation which have been ascribed to him; it is doubtful whether there were any of those "howlings and lamentations of the poor wretched people, taking their last leave of him," which rend the heart in Sir Gilbert Elliot's speech and in the letter attributed to Sheriff Macrabie; and it is very doubtful indeed whether, at the moment the drop fell, the Hindus set up a universal yell, and, with piercing cries of horror and dismay, betook themselves to flight, running, many of them, as far as the Ganges, and plunging into that holy stream, as if to wash away the pollution they had contracted in viewing such a spectacle. Once we were deceived by this narrative, by this letter, and by this speech; but we had not then ascertained the very doubtful character of the letter upon which everything rests, nor had we weighed testimony on the other side.

Sir Gilbert Elliot laid down the axiom that the proper way of reforming Indian abuse was to punish some great Indian delinquent. He proceeded to demonstrate that there was no greater delinquent — Hastings always excepted —than the late chief justice. He stated the nature, the occasion, and the purposes of the commission under which Sir Elijah Impey had been sent out to India: he contended that in the two great objects committed to his charge— the protection of the Company from the frauds of their servants, and the protection of the natives from the oppression of Europeans—Sir Elijah had, by corruptly changing sides, added his new powers to the very force they were intended to control, and taken an active part in the oppressions which it was his duty to have prevented. Sir Gilbert energetically called upon the gentlemen of the law, to which body he himself had once belonged, to throw off from the nation and from their profession the guilt of an individual lawyer, by bringing him to punishment for crimes which had been committed in the name of law. The articles of charge which he moved to be read related— 1. To the trial and execution of Nuncomar; 2. To the conduct of Sir Elijah in a cause called the Patna cause; 3. To extension of jurisdiction, illegally and oppressively, beyond the intention of the act and charter; 4. To the Cossijurah cause, in which the extension of jurisdiction had been carried out with peculiar violence; 5. To the acceptance of the office of judge of the Sudder Dewannee Adaulut, which was affirmed to be contrary to law, and not only repugnant to the spirit of the act and charter, but fundamentally subversive of all its material purposes; 6. To the conduct of Sir Elijah in Oude and Benares, where, it was declared, the chief justice became the agent and tool of Hastings. Sir Gilbert Elliot affirmed that the conduct of the supreme court, and especially of Sir Elijah Impey, had been the subject of complaint in India from the first months of its institution; that Sir Elijah was accused, by a majority of the supreme council, of one of the most atrocious of offences that was ever laid to the account of man; and this made the subject of the first charge. He reminded his hearers that parliament had judged it proper, on the report made by the select committee on the Patna

* Major Rennell, the geographer, &c.

cause, to express its sense of the injustice and oppression of that judgment by reversing it; that parliament had not only granted the indemnity desired by the members of council for resisting the acts of the supreme court, but had expressly abridged the extravagant and oppressive jurisdiction claimed by the court in the instances comprised in the third charge, which were similar, though inferior in magnitude, to the occurrences detailed in the fourth charge: that the House had pressed the recall of Sir Elijah expressly for having accepted the office of judge of the Sudder Dewannee Adaulut, which was the subject of the fifth charge; and finally, that Mr. Hastings was actually under prosecution by impeachment for the very crime in which the sixth charge accused Sir Elijah as accessory. The charges being received and laid upon the table, they were, upon a motion, read by the clerk in short, *pro forma*, after which Sir Gilbert moved that they should be at once referred to a committee. This was objected to by Mr. Pitt, who suggested that the charges ought in the first place to be printed and then referred to a committee of the whole House. This mode of proceeding was adopted; and the 4th of February (1788) was fixed for the committee. On that day a petition was presented from Sir Elijah Impey, praying to be heard in answer to the charges, before the House proceeded any further. The prayer being granted, he was called to the bar. Sir Elijah complained that he had been recalled upon one charge, and was now accused on five other charges, of which he had had no previous intimation. He said that the whole matter of the four first articles was collected from evidence which had been drawn up by committees of the House, the last of which sat in 1781; that this evidence had been fully discussed, had been the subject of an act of parliament, and yet had furnished no charges against him at the time. He continued: "On the 27th of January, 1783, I received a letter from the Earl of Shelburne, dated the 8th of July, 1782, which conveyed his majesty's commands to me to return to this kingdom for the purpose of answering a charge *specified* in an address which had been laid before his majesty in consequence of a vote of the 3rd of May, 1782. That vote related only *to the acceptance of an office not agreeable to the true intent and meaning of the act* 13 Geo. III. As the cause assigned for my recall was *subsequent* to all the transactions which have furnished matter for these charges, I entertained no idea that anything *within the knowledge of the House, prior* to the cause which had been selected as a charge against me, would be objected to me. In this opinion I was confirmed by the letters of my private friends; and I was thereby induced to esteem his lordship's letter, so particularising the charge, to be *a specific notice* of the whole evidence which I was to bring with me for my defence. I could not suspect, when the *acceptance of an office* had appeared the most proper subject for prosecution, that an accusation *for so foul an offence* as that contained in the first article could have been omitted. Under these impressions, though I collected all possible materials to defend myself against the charge of which I had notice, I did not bring any with me for the defence of those acts which, knowing [them] to be legal, and done in the necessary and conscientious discharge of my duty, *I had no reason* to think could ever have been imputed to me as criminal, and for which *I had reason* to think all intention of arraigning either me or the other judges, after the fullest consideration, had been totally abandoned. Had notice been given me, even after my arrival (in England), or *within two years* of it, that these charges would have been preferred against me, I should have had full time to procure authentic vouchers and records for my judicial conduct, and witnesses to such other matters as could not be proved by written evidence. Thus misled by appearances, I am called to answer those charges without any evidence but that which I may be able to extract from the very materials which have been compiled against me, and from some few papers which I have casually, not purposely, brought with me." It had been urged that the first article, relating to Nuncomar's execution, was supported by the general sense of mankind; but he observed that, before the sense of man-

kind in general could be admitted, it would be just to examine by what means it had been acquired. If it was found to be the opinion of the public, founded on an impartial statement of the facts, on ample discussion of the arguments on both sides, on a full investigation of the proceedings, its authority was irresistible, and in that case it might be truly said that *vox populi est vox Dei*. But, if partial representations had been laid before the public; if one side of the question only had been stated; if no inquiry had been made into the facts; if it turned out that the public had been abused and misled; then the public opinion would be of no value, and to give weight to it would be to deliver up the lives, properties, and fame of the best men to the rage of partisans and the virulence of libellers, the base and mercenary instruments of every malignant and unprincipled faction. "It is now twelve years," said he, "since this nation has been deluded by false and perpetual informations, that the supreme court of judicature had most absurdly, cruelly, and without authority, obtruded the complex and intricate criminal laws of England on the populous nations of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, whose law, religion, and habits were peculiarly abhorrent to them; that *a native of Bengal*, of high rank, had been tried and convicted on a capital law of England for an offence punishable *in the place where it was committed* by fine only; that the court which had tried him had *no jurisdiction* over his person; that he was brought within the limits of the jurisdiction *by force*, and in that state that the court adjudged that its jurisdiction had attached upon him; and, to sum up all, in the words most deservedly odious to an English ear, he was finally executed under that which, if a law at all, was an *ex post facto* law." He complained that all kinds of calumnies had been propagated through the press, not merely in daily papers, but in laboured treatises, in histories, in books of travels, fabricated for the sole purpose of disseminating and perpetuating libels of this and a similar tendency, with a more certain effect because less suspected. These authors had dared to make use of the high and respectable names of Sir William Blackstone and Lord Mansfield, as condemning the illegality of the proceedings in the case of Nuncomar, the latter being made to call the execution "*a legal* murder." He read a letter written by Blackstone, who was recently dead, to express his admiration of the high reputation which he (Sir Elijah) and his colleagues had acquired by their prudent and impartial administration of justice in India; he prided himself on enjoying the favourable opinion of Lord Mansfield, who was living, and in full possession of all his faculties, though at a very advanced age, and he assured the House that, so far from using any such expressions, that noble lord had declared that he had never formed any opinion upon Nuncomar's case,—that the assertion was an absolute falsehood, and that he authorised him so to contradict it. The name of another great lawyer, Lord Ashburton (Dunning), had also been introduced to add to the weight of the popular condemnation. He read a letter from that nobleman expressly to the point, and containing his full approbation of Nuncomar's trial.* Dunning, like Blackstone, was in his grave, and Lord Mansfield, as full of honour as of years, had recently retired from the bench. "These," said Sir Elijah, "were not men who would hold correspondence with judges guilty of a legal murder; these were not men who would be volunteers in applauding such conduct; they were great lawyers in their day; they are gone, and almost a new generation has succeeded them. Though it has been given out authoritatively, and propagated in print to prejudice my cause, I shall not, till I am convinced by fatal experience, be induced to believe that the gentlemen of the same profession now in this House can so totally differ in opinion from them as to have reprobated my conduct and prejudged me unheard. . . . . My de-

* Dunning's letter was dated January the 5th, 1776. The passage which Sir Elijah read was this: "The publication of the trial has been of use, as it has obviated abundance of ridiculous and groundless stories. I see nothing in the proceedings to disapprove of, except that you seem to have wasted more time on the discussion of the privileges of ambassadors than so ridiculous a claim deserved."

fence depending chiefly on matters of law, my reliance is on no personal favour, but on their professional ability to determine on matters of law, and their characteristic habit not to condemn, not to reprobate, without a hearing. *Audi alteram partem* is a maxim acknowledged to be equitable by all who know what justice is; but it is engraven on the heart of every honest lawyer." After recapitulating the several articles contained in the charge about Nuncomar, as that he had illegally brought the rajah under the jurisdiction of his court, that Nuncomar had been committed on false and insufficient evidence, that all the proceedings were the fruit of a confederacy between him and Warren Hastings, for the purpose of screening Hastings from a just accusation by accomplishing the death of his accuser, &c., he said that if the premises were true they warranted a more severe conclusion than the words of the charge, which pronounced him guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors. "If the premises are true," said he, "then I am guilty, not of misdemeanors, but of murder—I am guilty of a murder of the basest, foulest, and most aggravated nature. From such premises *that* is the only *true* conclusion. I do not decline it. It would have been justice to have drawn it. My life would then have been forfeit, had I been found guilty: it would have been mercy to have sacrificed that life as an atonement for these enormous crimes, which, if I am convicted of [them], or am to lie under the public imputation of having perpetrated [them], would become a burden too intolerable to be dragged to a distant grave. The substance of this charge has long been before the public, but brought before it in a manner which afforded me no means of answering it. The weight of it has, indeed, borne so heavy on me, that nothing but the consolation of my own conscience, indignation for unworthy treatment, and the expectation that the truth would at some time or other be revealed, could have supported me under it. With an overflowing heart I return my thanks to God, and his immediate instrument, my accuser, that he has been pleased to afford me this opportunity, now first given, of disclosing the true state of this so long misrepresented case, and of vindicating my own honour and the conduct of the much injured judges of the supreme court." After reciting the powers and the extent of the jurisdiction of the court as established by act and charter, he positively averred that, from the establishment of the court till he left Bengal in December, 1783, there had been no indictment tried against any person who was not an *inhabitant of Calcutta*, nor for crimes *not committed in Calcutta*. He insisted that Nuncomar was a *settled inhabitant* of Calcutta, that he was not ignorant of the law, but well acquainted with it, and that the crime with which he was charged *was committed in Calcutta*. "An Hindu inhabitant of Calcutta," said he, "was as much amenable to the English law in Calcutta as if the said Hindu had been an inhabitant of London. He might with equal propriety object to being tried by any law but that of his native country at the Old Bailey as at the Court-house in Calcutta. Gibraltar, in the kingdom of Spain, is—Calais, in that of France, was—part of the dominion of this realm: admitting the laws of England to have been introduced into those towns, a French inhabitant of Calais, or a Spanish inhabitant of Gibraltar, having offended against the law under which he dwelt, might with equal reason complain that he was not tried by the law of the place of his nativity, as an Hindu in Calcutta, because that town is situated in Bengal. There is nothing in the quality of an Hindu that makes the law of the country wherein he was born more attached to him than to a Frenchman or Spaniard;—all must be obedient to the law that protects them. It was not till since the seat of government and the collection of the revenues have been brought to Calcutta, that it has become populous by the influx of black inhabitants. The laws have not been obtruded on them, they have come to the laws of England." He affirmed, that long before his time the laws of England, statute and common, had been indiscriminately put in force at Calcutta; that murders, highway robberies, burglaries, felonies of all kinds, had been tried in the same manner as at the Old Bailey, and convictions and executions had on them,

as well against Hindus, Mussulmans, Portuguese, and other foreign inhabitants, as against those who were more especially called British subjects.* Copies of the records of the old court were in the India House, and must be full of such trials. Besides records, and the precedents they established, he had been guided by the royal charter and by instructions sent out by the court of directors, showing the new court how to proceed against prisoners not understanding English, how to proceed when any Portuguese, Hindu, or other native of India, not born of British parents, should happen to be prosecuted for any capital offence, which, according to the instructions, "*would probably often happen.*" On legal conclusions and precedents the supreme court would have been justified in trying Nuncomar as an inhabitant of Calcutta for a crime committed in Calcutta: but before proceeding to the trial he and his brother judges made a still more particular search, and found that this specific statute of forgery had been acted on and most completely published to all the inhabitants of Calcutta, and to the Hindus more especially; for he found that in 1765 one Raddachund Mettre, an Hindu, had been tried, convicted, and received sentence of death by the former court, for the forgery of the codicil of a will of one Cojah Solomon, an Armenian. He admitted that this Hindu had not been hanged, but that was because it was the first condemnation for such a crime. "I found," said he, "that the Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta had petitioned the president and council for his respite, not pretending that they were not subject to the laws of Calcutta, but chiefly on this ground,—that till that trial neither they nor the prisoner understood the crime to be punishable by death, it not being so by the country laws. Their petition was solely for mercy *in that instance*, without any complaint of the law, or desire that it should not in future be executed. In consequence of this application the president and council resolved to recommend the prisoner to mercy in these remarkable expressions—'in hopes that the condemnation will be sufficient to deter others from committing the like offence.' [The Hindus were much addicted to the crime.] It appeared by the records that the East India Company had sent his majesty's pardon; but all my diligence could not furnish me with any comment made on this proceeding; and finding no censure passed upon it by the court of directors or the king's ministers, to whom the case must have been submitted to obtain the pardon, and that the whole passed in the ordinary course of business, and accorded with the other proceedings of the court, I esteemed it a full precedent, more especially as there had been a plain intimation from the governor and council, if the condemnation should not be sufficient to deter the natives from the commission of forgery, that the law would be enforced in future." "We are glad," said the directors, "you have interfered in his behalf." It was alleged in the present articles of charge that Nuncomar had been brought to Calcutta by force, and was there detained as a prisoner at the time of the commission of the crime. "I deny the truth of the fact," said Sir Elijah, "and those gentlemen who were members of the council when Nuncomar was tried, and are now members of this House, must well know the fact is not true. Had it been true, yet, before it could be matter of objection to the judgment, it must be shown it was proved in evidence at the trial; it then would have been made part, and a material part, of his defence; it would have been decisive in his favour: but the contrary was in proof at the trial; he was proved to be a *settled inhabitant* of Calcutta; no such objection was ever suggested, nor was any attempt made to take him out of the jurisdiction of the court as not being an inhabitant of the town." He said he could trace the story of Nuncomar's being conducted to Calcutta, and detained a prisoner there until the arrival of the supreme court, to no better authority than that of a libellous letter in a book entitled 'Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa,' published in 1782;* that the

* Abundant evidence to this effect was produced in the course of the proceedings against Hastings.

* The book referred to is, 'Mackintosh's

author of that book, from his known connexion, might have received more true information; and that that book, like every libel published on the subject, uniformly endeavoured, as the articles of charge were now doing, to advance the character of Sir Robert Chambers at the expense of his own. As to the part of the charge which alleged that Nuncomar had been convicted on false and insufficient evidence, he requested the House, before they assented to the truth of that proposition, to peruse the whole trial and judge for themselves. As to the mode of execution by hanging, the laws of England left nothing to the discretion of the court, the sentence for the felony being that the convict be hung by the neck until he is dead. To vary was treated by our law books as criminal in the highest degree. "Some," said Impey, "go so far (though certainly too far) as to say that this is not in the power of the king himself; that he may indeed pardon part of the sentence (as, in high treason, all but beheading), but that he cannot order execution to be done in a manner variant from the sentence." He declared that before Nuncomar suffered, he had the most authentic information that Hindus of all castes, Brahmins included, had been executed by hanging. "I was particularly informed," he said, "by a gentleman formerly a member of the council in Bengal, and now a member of this House,* who has this day repeated to me the same information, that he had himself carried such sentence into execution against two Brahmins, without any disturbance, and even with the consent of the Hindus themselves. The prosecutor who sued for the execution in Nuncomar's case was an Hindu; many of the witnesses were Hindus; what the sentence must be was well known to the prisoner, the prosecutor, and all the Hindus in the settlement; yet no objection was made by the prisoner

Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa; 2 vols. 8vo., 1782;' of which a French translation appeared at Paris the same year, and a German translation at Leipsic in 1785. We have now in our hands a copy of the work which belonged to Sir Elijah Impey. The full title of this book is, 'Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa; describing Characters, Customs, Manners, Laws, and Productions of Nature and Art: containing various remarks on the Political and Commercial Interests of Great Britain: and delineating, in particular, A New System for the Government and Improvement of the British Settlements in the East Indies: begun in the year 1777, and finished in 1781.' Like the letter attributed to Sheriff Macrabie, Francis's brother-in-law, this book of Travels (in the form of Letters) bears internal evidence of having been, if not written, at least revised and augmented by Francis himself. The name of Mackintosh, which does not appear in the title-page, is clearly a nom de guerre. If such an individual had existed, and if he had been capable of writing so well without assistance, he would have been heard of again, and he could scarcely have failed, in that day, when good writers were far from numerous, of attaining to celebrity. No such Mackintosh was ever heard of after the publication of the book. The writer of that book shuns all the subjects in which Philip Francis was awkwardly implicated during his residence at Calcutta (for example, he says not a syllable about Monsieur and Madame Le Grand and the crim. con. trial at which Sir Elijah Impey presided); and he dwells upon all those subjects and projects which Francis held to be honourable to himself as member of the council and opponent of Hastings; he applauds all those individuals who took part with Francis, and he condemns with the true Junius virulence all those who took part with Hastings. His attack on the Chief Justice is more guarded; and it is worthy of observation that though he gives the name in full of Sir Robert Chambers and others, and the initials of the two other judges and of many other high functionaries, he gives neither the name nor so much as the initials of Sir Elijah Impey. The whole story of the trial and execution of Nuncomar is given very briefly. It looks like the performance of a man that was laying a foundation for future calumnies. Instead of the elaborated account of the execution contained in the Sheriff Macrabie's letter, we have here but one short sentence—"He was found guilty; condemned to be hanged; and was publicly executed within a few paces of Fort William, to the utter astonishment and terror of all Hindostan." Short as the account is, it however contains the germ of nearly every calumny and falsehood that was afterwards embodied in Sir Gilbert Elliot's speech or in the charges against Hastings. Yet this account makes two of the judges as guilty as Impey in the Nuncomar business, and exonerates only Sir Robert Chambers. It says "All the Bench, except Sir Robert Chambers, declared that he was amenable to that law." But Sir Robert Chambers, as we have said—and as is proved by abundant evidence—never doubted that the rajah was amenable to the laws of England—never did anything more than offer a suggestion that he should be tried under the statute of Queen Elizabeth, which was milder indeed, but which was clearly obsolete; and Chambers concurred in the sentence which Impey merely pronounced as the organ of the court. If, therefore, there was guilt or error, it was incurred by all the Bench, and by Chambers just as much as by Impey.

* Evidently Barwell.

or his counsel, before or after the sentence was pronounced, to the mode by which he was to suffer death; no evidence was given of its being shocking to the religious opinions of the Hindus; no mention of it was made in the address of the Hindus." The articles alleged in the broadest manner that there was a conspiracy between him and Hastings in order to destroy so dangerous a witness as Nuncomar, and inferences to support the assertion were drawn from these circumstances:—that the forgery had been committed five years before Nuncomar was brought to trial before the supreme court; that it had been, and was at the time, the subject of a *civil suit* in the Dewannee Adaulut, a country court; and that no steps had ever been taken to make it a matter of *criminal* prosecution, much less of a *capital* indictment, until Nuncomar had become the accuser of the governor-general. General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Francis had even deposed that in the interval between the forgery and the trial Nuncomar had been protected and employed by Hastings; and this deposition had been inserted in the report of a committee of the House of Commons. Now, in defending himself, Sir Elijah Impey not merely admitted, but insisted upon, the fact asserted by Clavering, Monson, and Francis; and he even cited the evidence of Hastings himself when examined upon oath on the trial of Joseph Fowke and others for a conspiracy against him. This course, if it proved that Nuncomar could not have been tried for forgery before he *was* tried, proved also that the governor-general had, at least in this case, put himself above the law for temporary political purposes—proved that the guilty could not be prosecuted, previously to the arrival of the supreme court, so long as Hastings extended his protection. Hastings's evidence *upon oath*, which Impey read to the House, contained, however, a denial of his ever having directly or indirectly countenanced or forwarded the prosecution against Nuncomar. When asked whether he had not had connections with that rajah, he had said he certainly had; that he had employed him on many occasions; had patronised and countenanced him, though he never had any opinion of his virtue or integrity, and believed the rajah knew he had not. "It was in evidence," said Impey, "at the trial that Mr. Palk, judge of the Adaulut, had once confined him (Nuncomar) for the forgery. It was notorious that Mr. Hastings had ordered him to be released. This of itself was sufficient to prevent any native inhabitant of Calcutta from commencing a prosecution against him, for there was then no other criminal court to resort to but that in which Mr. Hastings presided. It was in evidence also that the prosecutor had it not in his power to commence a criminal suit, even in the court in which Mr. Hastings presided, or in any other court, *before the time at which the indictment was actually preferred;* for the *forged instrument* was deposited in the mayor's court, and could not be procured from thence until the judges of the supreme court arrived at Calcutta. It was not restored to the party entitled to it till after the records and papers of the mayor's court had been delivered over to the supreme court. One main cause assigned for erecting the supreme court was, that the Company's servants either presided in or could influence the other courts. The supreme court, the only court where Mr. Hastings's influence could not extend, sat for the first time towards the end of October, 1774. In June, 1775, at the first effective court of oyer and terminer and gaol delivery held by that court, the indictment was preferred and tried. That the endeavouring to procure the papers from the mayor's court was intended as '*a step* taken' towards a criminal prosecution, before Nuncomar became the accuser of Mr. Hastings, I have no evidence to prove; but that no *effectual steps* could have been taken I have given satisfactory proof. As there had been no delay in the prosecution, as the point of time when the prosecution was brought was the *first possible point* of time when it could be brought, no presumption whatsoever could arise from lapse of time, or the coincidence of the prosecution of Mohunpersaud * with the accusation before the council, or from the unavoidable accident of the prosecution not having been commenced until

* The prosecutor of Nuncomar.

he had become the accuser of Mr. Hastings. That the accusation was the cause of the prosecution of Nuncomar by another person,—that it had been the subject of a civil suit in the Dewannee court, there was no legal evidence: the proceedings themselves, or authenticated copies, ought to have been shown: parole testimony was not admissible; it did not lie on the *prosecutor* to produce them. Had they tended to the defence of the prisoner, *he* should have produced them; his *not doing* it at least induced a strong suspicion that they would *not have made for him.* That suspicion was strengthened by the evidence given that he had been imprisoned by Mr. Palk, the judge of the court in which the proceedings were supposed to have been had. The matter, therefore, having been in a civil court, as he made it no part of his defence, but chose to keep back the evidence, furnishing a fair presumption against him, it could not with justice have been applied by the court to fling an imputation on the prosecution, nor did it give any appearance that the prosecution bore any relation to the accusation against Mr. Hastings." All this may prove that the supreme court could not have tried Nuncomar sooner than they did; but it does not prove that the governor-general had not chosen the moment for letting loose the proofs of Nuncomar's guilt. But, at the same time, there was nothing in the circumstance of Nuncomar's being in the character of an accuser of Hastings that could stop proceedings against himself upon a separate and unconnected charge, brought forward by a different prosecutor, with different witnesses, and with everything about it different and distinct. "The prosecutor," said Impey, "had a right to demand redress: to have refused it would have been a denial of justice. Had I taken so decided a part as to have flung out the indictment on the ground of the prisoner having been the accuser of Mr. Hastings, how could I have justified the casting that imputation on the prosecution, without any evidence being laid before the court that any accusation existed? Had there been evidence of an accusation, with what justice to the community at large could the court have adjudged that to be a sufficient cause for not putting the prisoner on his trial? If such indemnities were held forth to informers, what man would have been safe in his property, liberty, fame, or life? What kind of informers were likely to be brought forward? Those who by their crimes were subjected to the laws, and had been thereby taught that, by simply preferring accusations, they would be protected from the justice of the laws." After mentioning what was set forth in the charge—as that Nuncomar had accused Hastings of various peculations and other corrupt practices before the council at Calcutta, and that Hastings, instead of confronting his accuser, though proper, under pretence of his dignity, to decline all defence, and to dissolve the said council at various times—Impey asked how this could affect him, as nothing of the sort had been before him and the court when they were proceeding against Nuncomar? He said that the circumstances were not only not in evidence, but were not known to him and the other judges; that by rumour, and by rumour only, it was known in Calcutta that Nuncomar had preferred some accusations against Mr. Hastings—accusations which, so far from being public, were preferred to the council in their private department, where each member was under an oath of secrecy. If the prisoner Nuncomar was an object of the special protection of the court, from the circumstances in which he stood as an accuser, that claim should have been laid before the court in evidence, and ought to have formed part of the defence:—they were all matters capable of proof; they were proper subjects to go to a jury. Why were they kept back? Why were not the court and jury acquainted therewith? "If," continued Impey, "they could leave no doubt in the mind and opinion of the jury, the jury would not have hesitated to acquit the prisoner. If the judges *must* have been convinced, it would have been their duty to have directed the acquittal. This was the only mode by which protection could have been legally given to Nuncomar: they were not thought sufficient to produce that conviction when the transactions were recent; if they had been, they would have formed

a material part of the defence. Why, then, is it averred they must produce such conviction now, at a distance of thirteen years from the transactions?" It was inserted in the charge, and Impey allowed it to be true, that Chambers had made a motion from the bench for altering the indictment; but Impey urged that this was done more *in favorem vitæ*, and from the natural lenity of Chambers's disposition, than from any sound reason in law. Sir Robert Chambers had wished to try Nuncomar on a statute that did not inflict capital punishment for forgery——the 5th of Elizabeth—thinking it optional in the court to adopt that statute, instead of the statute of George II., which made forgery capital. "That it was optional in the court," said Sir Elijah, "to choose the statute which it liked best, I thought impossible: for I understood it to be an undoubted maxim in law, that, whenever a statute constitutes that offence which was a misdemeanor to be a felony, the existence of the misdemeanor is destroyed and annihilated; or, as lawyers express it, the misdemeanor is merged in the felony. The 2nd George II. having made forgery, which was a misdemeanor both at common law and by the 5th Elizabeth, to be a felony, the offence at law and by the 5th Elizabeth were both merged; and neither the common law nor the 5th Elizabeth was any longer the existing law with regard to forgery. The 2nd George II. became the only law by which forgery was a crime; the court therefore must have proceeded on that statute or not at all. If forgery was not a capital offence in Calcutta, it was no offence there. If the statute could not have been put in force, it would have operated as a pardon for the offence which the legislature intended it to punish with more severity. These arguments were made use of by me in court to support the indictment. By these I then understood that Sir Robert Chambers was *convinced;* he most certainly *acquiesced;* I never understood him to have been overruled, and his subsequent conduct proves most manifestly that he was not: for he not only sat through the whole trial, but *concurred in overruling every objection in arrest of judgment; assented to the summing up of the evidence; was present, and concurred in the sentence.*" Impey then read a paragraph of a letter written to the court of directors shortly after the trial, and signed by Chambers, the two other judges, and himself, and in which they all asserted that they had in every instance been unanimous, whatever representation might be made to the contrary. Impey further showed that all the judges, Chambers included, signed the calendars, which were the only warrants for execution in Calcutta. Nay, still further: he showed that Chambers, on the same day and only a few hours after the execution of Nuncomar, proposed carrying the consequences of the conviction even beyond the execution; and he read a letter in which Chambers suggested that the sheriff should be immediately ordered to seal up not only the books and papers of the malefactor, but also his house and goods; and that a commission should issue under the seal of the supreme court, to inquire after his effects at Moorshedabad and elsewhere.* Sir Elijah said that, as the charter had not appointed any officer to secure escheats and forfeitures, he did not consider it to be the duty of the court to act as escheator for the crown, and that, therefore, he declined giving any such orders. Sir Elijah had no recollection of any appeal; but he had reason to believe that a petition delivered by the prisoner, desiring to be respited and recommended to his majesty's mercy, had been, after a long lapse of time, confounded with an appeal. If there had been an appeal, it must remain on record and be capable of proof. He quoted the clause of the charter respecting appeals, by which clause the supreme court had full and absolute power to allow or *deny* appeals. He next quoted the clause relating to respites: by this last clause the supreme court were empowered "to reprieve and suspend the execution of any capital offence, wherein there shall appear, in their judgment, a proper occasion for mercy;" but in such case they were to transmit to

* Chambers said in this letter, "Among his papers it is said there will be found bonds from many persons, both black and white, against whom I conceive that writs *scire facias* should be directed by us as supreme coroners."

the sovereign a state of the case, of the evidence, and of their reasons for recommending the criminal to mercy. Hereupon Impey argued that neither the law nor the charter required the judges to assign reasons for carrying the judgment into execution; that it was only in case of their not executing it that they were bound to assign their reasons. He maintained that there were no reasons to be assigned for respiting Nuncomar. "Could it," said he, "have been stated as a reason to his majesty that Nuncomar had preferred an accusation against Mr. Hastings? Who was the accuser, and who was the accused? It was notorious to all India that Nuncomar had been the public accuser of Mohammed Reza Khan without effect, though supported by the power and influence of government. He had been convicted before the judges of a conspiracy to bring false accusations against another member of the council. Against whom was the accusation? Not against Mr. Hastings censured by the House of Commons; not against Mr. Hastings impeached before the House of Lords; not the Mr. Hastings for whom the scaffold is now erected in Westminster Hall; but that Mr. Hastings whom I had heard the prime-minister of England, in full Parliament, declare to consist of the only flesh and blood that had resisted temptation in the infectious climate of India; that Mr. Hastings whom the king and parliament of England had selected for his exemplary integrity, and intrusted with the most important interest of this realm! Whatever ought to be my opinion of Mr. Hastings *now*, I claim to be judged by the opinion I ought to have had of him *then*." Sir Elijah insisted that neither he nor the other judges had prejudiced Nuncomar, or acted unfairly towards him or his witnesses; that, while there was no reason that could justify the court in recommending the prisoner to mercy, there were many against it; that the defence, in the opinion both of the judges and jury, was a fabricated system of perjury; that the jury requested that the prisoner's witnesses might be prosecuted; that after the trial it became matter of public notoriety that the defence had been fabricated, and witnesses procured to swear to it by an agent of the prisoner; and that one of the judges, Mr. Justice Lemaistre, had declared that a large sum of money had been offered to him to procure a respite. In the next place Impey alluded to the attentions and honours paid to Nuncomar while in prison by General Clavering, Monson, and Francis; stating that the secretaries and aides-de-camp of those members of council visited him after his commitment for the felony, and that even the ladies of the families of General Clavering and Colonel Monson were in the habit of sending their compliments to him in the prison. He affirmed, what had already been affirmed upon oath in another place, that Nuncomar, cheered by these flattering attentions—very unusual in such a case—conceived hopes of his being released, through the influence of General Clavering and Colonel Monson, even to the day before his execution, when he wrote a letter to the council for that purpose. After reading the affidavit of Yeandle, the gaoler, Impey read two other affidavits made at the time by two gentlemen at Calcutta who were connected with the native inhabitants, and who swore that it was an opinion prevalent among them that the rajah would be released by General Clavering or the council. One of these affidavits was that of Mr. Alexander Elliot, a younger brother of Sir Gilbert Elliot, the present accuser of Sir Elijah Impey. Alexander Elliot, who held at the time a civil office at Calcutta, had been conversant with the whole business, and had even interpreted at the trial of Nuncomar. He left India not long after to return to England, and was then intrusted with a discretionary power from Impey and his brother judges to publish the trial if he thought it necessary. "He," said Impey, "had collated the notes, and had undertaken to bear testimony to the authority of them; he had served voluntarily as interpreter through the whole trial. He pointed out the prevarications of the witnesses; he could have verified the narration from his own memory: and he could have spoken as an eye-witness to my particular conduct at the trial. He lived in that intimacy with me, that I may almost say he made part of my family; and as no secret of my heart was unrevealed to him, he could have given

the fullest and most unequivocal account of my sentiments with regard to carrying the sentence into execution. . . . . The calumnies propagated from Calcutta by minutes (of council), secret there, but published, and meant to be published, in England, made him use the discretion intrusted to him to refute them. He printed the trial:* his testimony could have supported the truth of it; if it could not, no consideration would have prevailed on him to have published a trial with such gross misrepresentations, and, by undertaking the vindication of the judges, to have been instrumental in deceiving the king, his ministers, and the public in the most abandoned manner. He is unfortunately no more. But though I am deprived of his living testimony, yet his acts and his character still bear evidence for me." Impey then read a letter from another gentleman eminent in the civil service in India, to show the sense entertained of Alexander Elliot's excellent qualities, and the impression made by his premature death; and he otherwise dwelt upon the subject in a manner to embarrass Sir Gilbert Elliot, the brother of the deceased. "Inventive malice," said Impey, "can do no injury to his memory, except the prosecutor (his own brother!), by maintaining the foul motives charged on me, should, by necessary consequence, fix them on him, and thereby blast his fair fame with unmerited infamy, for the zealous part he took in the investigation of truth." † In his correspondence with the secretary of state Impey had referred to Mr. Elliot and to the papers of which he was the bearer, for proofs that nothing relating to the trial was intended to be hid from the English nation. In the same letter to the secretary of state, a copy of which Impey read at the bar, he affirmed that, on a detection of gross practices on the part of the prisoner to suborn the witnesses, made before Mr. Justice Lemaistre and Mr. Justice Hyde, a band of witnesses sent down from Burdwan to give evidence at his trial immediately disappeared; and that it would be seen, on perusal of the trial, that the guilt of the prisoner was proved as strongly from the case he attempted to make out as from the evidence on the side of the prosecution. Sir Elijah also read a letter addressed to himself by Mr. Alexander Elliot, in which that gentleman spoke of the disputes, misrepresentations, and falsehoods of the majority of the supreme council (Francis, Clavering, and Monson), and pledged himself to be warm in defending the judges. In this letter Elliot said that no expressions could be harsher than what the council deserved. Sir Elijah complained that there had never been an instance of so extraordinary a charge against any judge in England, even on a *recent* cause; and that his own case was the more perilous and the more extraordinary, in his being accused on account of acts done thirteen years before the time at which and in a country sixteen thousand miles from the place in which he was now called upon to answer for them, and that not only without receiving any notice of the charge, but after having been misled into a security that no such charge would ever be made against him. He reminded the House that his prosecutor, Sir Gilbert Elliot, had not even asserted that he could produce any evi-

* The trial was afterwards inserted in Howell's State Trials.

† Even that libellous book of travels, which we firmly believe to have been written or retouched by Francis, contains a high panegyric of Mr. A. *Elliot*, the younger brother of Sir Gilbert, who was assailing the fair fame of Impey, who was holding up as a murderer, and the worst of villains, the man with whom his near relative had lived as a son lives with his father.

"Here let me digress from my narrative, in order to lament the too early fate of one of the most amiable characters and elevated geniuses that ever dignified humanity. All who knew him were his friends; even strangers, to whom report alone afforded an opportunity of admiring his talents and virtues, mourned for the death of Mr. Elliot. He fell a martyr to patriotism and fidelity to the East India Company."—Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa, &c. And yet this self-contradicting and spurious book says, that "The trial published in England is universally declared on this side (that is, in India) to be spurious and false." And this trial published in England (where none other was published) was seen through the press and published by Mr. Alexander Elliot, the most amiable and patriotic of men, the most elevated of geniuses, who had himself acted as interpreter at the trial of Nuncomar! Could a man of such virtue continue to entertain a warm affection for a murderer? Could a man of such ability and genius be deceived and duped as to any part of a business in which he was both an eye-witness and an actor?

dence to show an illegal communication between him and Mr. Hastings or his partisans; that he was without evidence even that Mr. Hastings or his partisans were in any league or combination against the prisoner Nuncomar,—that they had any communication with the prosecutor, or were in any manner instrumental or privy to the prosecution. He said that Hastings himself had been purged on oath on that subject; that the only proof assumed was an inference drawn from the single circumstance that Nuncomar was not capitally indicted till after he had accused Hastings—a circumstance which had been satisfactorily accounted for; and he insisted that, though the fact had been for eleven years the subject of parliamentary investigation, and Hastings's conduct had been most critically scrutinized, nothing had been or possibly could be brought to light to prove any combination against Nuncomar. And yet, continued Sir Elijah, "it is asserted that such a notoriety has arisen as to produce a *universal necessary conviction* that the whole proceedings were for the purpose of screening Mr. Hastings from justice. That no such universal conviction did ever actually exist, I have the most infallible proofs, or, if it did exist, that the whole body of Armenians and Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta,—that all the free merchants, all the grand jury, all the petit jury, Sir Robert Chambers and all the judges, the governor-general and all the council, must have been united in the same horrid combination. For I have in my hand the addresses of all the Armenians, of all the Hindus, of all the free merchants, and of the grand jury, which authorized part and heard all our proceedings, when those proceedings were recent.* My portraits now hanging—the one in the town-hall, the other in the court-house—the one put up soon after his trial, the other on my leaving the settlement—if this notoriety be true, are libels against the inhabitants, the settlement, the judges, advocates, attorneys, and officers of the court, who subscribed no small sum for the preserving my memory amongst them." If the existence of a plot or combination against Nuncomar had been notorious, as described in Sir Gilbert Elliot's charge, how was the conduct of numerous and most respectable classes of men to be accounted for? Was it a universal conspiracy in favour of the governor-general? Was there no man left in all Calcutta, with conscience and courage enough to interpose in order to prevent this alleged legal murder? "The alleged notoriety," said Impey, "could not have had any operation on the minds of the grand jury who found the bill, nor of the petit jury who convicted him; nor of Sir Robert Chambers and the other judges who sat through the trial, agreeing and assenting to all the acts of the court; who concurred in giving sentence, in disallowing the appeal (if any there was), in refusing the respite, signing the calendar, and carrying the sentence into execution. Had my conduct been profligate, as it is stated to have been, should not the other judges, instead of concurring, have opposed me in every step? If Sir Robert Chambers had really, as is asserted, thought the proceedings illegal,—if this notoriety had produced this conviction in him,—if he deemed my conduct iniquitous, was not he particularly bound to have taken an

* Sir Elijah insisted that these Calcutta addresses had proceeded spontaneously from the good opinion of those who drew them up and signed them. He said—"To the addresses I know objections have been made, and perhaps will be revived, that they were procured by power and influence. How such influence or power could be derived from the court, cannot, I believe, be easily accounted for. In whom the power and influence of government were then vested, every act of power and every record of the Company have fully published. The Company's servants, on whom such power and influence must act most immediately and forcibly, formed the only body that did not join in the addresses. And that the gentleman whose name stood first on the address of the free merchants, who had been president of the settlement, and then enjoyed the office of superintendent of the police, for which a knowledge of the manners and habits of the country was particularly necessary, and for which his long residence in the country had peculiarly qualified him, was, immediately after presenting the address, without any fault objected to him, discharged from his office, and his place supplied by a gentleman who had not been many months in the settlement, is a fact which will not be controverted." The gentleman thus thrust into the office of superintendant of the police was Mr. Macrabie, *brother-in law to Francis.*

active part? Should he not have given a counter-charge to the jury? Should he not, by exposing my corruption and detecting my partiality, have held me up (if I had not sufficiently done it myself) to the detestation of the jury and the whole settlement? This has, under similar circumstances, been done by honest puisne judges in England: could passiveness and silence in such a case be reconciled to honour and conscience? That this notoriety did not influence the governor-general and council, or that which is called the majority of the council, I am able to give still more convincing proofs from their direct unequivocal official public acts; and by *those acts* I desire it may be determined whether their opinions are in support of, or in opposition to, the prosecution on this article." Impey then related one of the most startling circumstances in the whole affair. On the 30th of August, 1775, several days after the execution of Nuncomar, the governor-general and council ordered a paper to be burned by the common hangman, as containing libellous matter against the judges. The paper was a petition or representation from Nuncomar to the council; but its contents were not published. The judges knew that both this paper and the proceedings on it *ought* to be transmitted to the directors and the king's ministers; and that the paper, though kept secret in Calcutta, would be made public in England. They therefore applied for a copy of the libel. This reasonable request was refused by the council; but Impey said he had obtained from the India House a copy of the libel, and of the proceedings of the council upon it; and these he now read to the Commons. The proceedings were in every way curious. On the 14th of August, *just nine days after Nuncomar had been hanged*, General Clavering informed the council that, on the 4th of that month, the day before the execution of the rajah, a person, calling himself a servant of Nuncomar, came to his house and sent in an open paper. In presenting the prayer *for a respite nine days after death*, Clavering said, "As I imagined that the paper might contain some request that I should take some step to intercede for him, and being resolved not to make any application whatever in his favour, I left the paper on my table until the 6th, which was the day after his execution, when I ordered it to be translated by my interpreter.* As it appears

* Yet Mr. Macaulay says—"Clavering, *it is said*, swore that, even at the foot of the gallows, Nuncomar should be rescued." (*Edin. Rev., Essays, Critical, Historical*, &c.) Where or by whom is this said? The books and papers which Mr. Macaulay has consulted on the subject are very few, and all of them one-sided; and yet, even in them nothing of the sort occurs. Mr. James Mill, whose dry materials are made attractive by Mr. Macaulay's lively manner of writing, says nothing about this *heroic* vow of General Clavering. Mill, indeed, calls the trial and execution of Nuncomar "this atrocious condemnation and execution upon an *ex post facto* law;" (it is evident he had never read the act of George II., which established the English law in Calcutta many years before the Regulating act, which created the Supreme Court, and several years before Nuncomar's forgery was committed); and he quotes the sheriff Macrabie letter as a paper of unquestionable authenticity, and adopts throughout the views and opinions of Francis and Sir Gilbert Elliot, who was little more than the echo of Francis. Mill says that the court "absolutely refused" to stay the execution until the King's pleasure should be known (no application was ever made to the court); but he does not say that Clavering swore he would save the convicted man—he does not say that any other member of the council either made any exertion, or even expressed any grief or indignation. Mr. Mill, indeed, suppresses any mention of the strange way, in which General Clavering dealt with Nuncomar's petition, which upsets Mr. Macaulay's *on dit*, even if he could quote an authority for it. If Francis, Clavering, and Monson had really wished to save the Rajah, they could have done it. They were, as we have already said, the majority in the council; they were carrying many measures of their own, against the votes and the will of Hastings and Barwell; and, in matters and interest which they really had at heart, these three men were capable of risking a civil war in Calcutta—were capable of proceeding to almost any extremity against Warren Hastings, the governor-general. It is quite possible to live for years, high in office, in the East India House, Leadenhall Street, without consulting the valuable Indian documents which exist in that House; and every intelligent reader knows that it is very possible for a writer to be dry and dull, without being correct; and for an historian to be very diffuse, without going into the best sources of information. The 'History of British India' abounds in error, prejudice, and unfairness, the unfairness being as often in omission as in commission, or as often in what is suppressed as in what is said. It is a book, too, written upon a dogmatical theory, and in a cold, sneering, Scoto-metaphysical, find-fault spirit, altogether unsuited to the bold, glowing, and romantic subject. In treating of the exploits of Lord Clive, Mr. Macaulay, whose great staple is this book and none

to me that this paper contains several circumstances which it may be proper for the court of directors and his majesty's ministers to be acquainted with, I have brought it with me here, and desire that the board will instruct me what I have to do with it: The title of it is, 'A Representation from Mahah Rajah Nuncomar to the General and Gentlemen of Council.'" Francis thought that the paper ought to be received and read. Barwell, who always voted with Hastings, could not understand by what authority General Clavering thought he might at his own pleasure keep back or bring before the board a paper addressed to them; or how the address came to be translated for the particular information of the general before it was presented to the council. "If the general," said he, "thinks himself authorized to suppress a paper addressed to the gentlemen of the council, he is the only judge of that authority: for my part I confess myself to be equally astonished at the mysterious air with which this paper is brought before us, and the manner in which it came to the general's possession, as likewise at the particular explanation of every part of it before it was brought to the board." The astonishment expressed by Barwell must be felt by every one that reads these strange transactions, nor will it be diminished by the explanation given by Clavering. The general said, in reply to Barwell, that until he had put the paper into the hands of his translator he could not know what it meant; that the first day the council met after his knowing the contents—that is to say, after Nuncomar had been hanged—he brought the paper to the board, but, the board not having gone that day into the *secret department*, he did not think it proper at that time to introduce it. Colonel Monson thought that the paper ought now to be received and read. Hastings said, "I do not understand this mystery. If there can be a doubt whether the paper be not already before the board, by the terms of the general's first minute upon it, I do myself insist that it be produced, if it be only to give me an opportunity of knowing the contents of an address to the superior council of India, excluding the first member in the title of it, and conferring that title on General Clavering; and I give it as my opinion that it ought to be produced." Clavering replied that the address did not bear the meaning

other, has found it expedient to put Mr. Mill upon the shelf now and then, and to adopt the more animated narrative of Orme and other writers; but in the case of Sir Elijah Impey he clings to Mill as to an oracle, scarcely looking at anything else except the parliamentary speeches of the prosecutors, the Regulating act, (why did he not look at the older act of George II?) and the sheriff Macrabie letter. But not even in that letter, questionable as it is in its authorship and all its parts, is there any mention made of Clavering's oath to save Nuncomar, though at the foot of the gallows! In the 'Travels in Europe, Asia, Africa, &c.' there is no mention of this unkept vow, nor is it so much as said in that work that Clavering individually, or as a member of the majority of council, made any attempt to defer execution, or that Francis or Monson, or any one else, whether English or native, whether Hindu or Mohammedan, pleaded for a respite. Other parts of the story, far more serious than this particular *on dit*, and just as devoid of foundation as it is, have been repeated without the slightest examination into facts and documents and without the slightest scruple. When Mr. Macaulay first published his brilliant article in the Edinburgh Review, he had never seen the volume containing Sir Elijah Impey's defence at the bar of the House of Commons, and two hundred and forty-three closely printed pages of documents. There was this excuse—the volume is become very scarce, and is little known even among book-collectors, and among that very limited class of men (whether as readers or as writers), who devote an almost exclusive attention to the history and affairs of British India. But between the publication of the brilliant article in the Review, and its re-publication in the volumes of Essays to which Mr. Macaulay has put his name, there appeared (though under a much humbler name), not only references to Sir Elijah Impey's speech, but also copious extracts from it, together with extracts from some of the documents contained in the Appendix; and the publication of these things made it imperative on Mr. Macaulay to procure, peruse, and diligently study the said Defence, and certain other materials not found in Mill's History, or in the sheriff Macrabie letter. Yet Mr. Macaulay never weighed this evidence, never referred either to the defence or to the documents; he went into no new research whatsoever, and he reprinted the Review article as an Historical essay, without the slightest alteration, and with only one sneering allusion at the most trifling point advanced by one who had diligently studied the speech and the documents, who had consulted other sources of information, and who had disproved several of the most heinous charges which Mr. Macaulay had repeated upon the one-sided authority of Mr. Mill, of the Macrabie letter, and of Sir Gilbert Elliot's speech.

which Hastings gave it; and that, at all events, he was no more answerable for the title of the paper than he was for its contents. It was then resolved that the paper should be received and read. Hastings then moved that, as the petition contained expressions reflecting upon the characters of the chief justice and judges, a copy of it should be sent to them. Francis objected that to send any such copy would be giving the thing more weight than it deserved. "I consider," said he, "the insinuations contained in it against them as wholly unsupported, and of a libellous nature; and if I am not irregular in this place, I would move that orders should be given to the sheriff to cause the original to be burned publicly by the hands of the common hangman." Mr. Barwell had no objection to the paper being burned by the hangman; but he agreed with the governor-general in thinking that a copy ought to be delivered to the judges. Colonel Monson, on the contrary, apprehended that the board, by communicating the thing to the judges, might make themselves liable to a prosecution for a libel. He added—"The paper I deem to have a libellous tendency, and the assertions contained in it are unsupported. I agree with Mr. Francis in opinion that the paper should be burned under the inspection of the sheriff by the hands of the common hangman." General Clavering also agreed with Francis that the paper ought to be burned at once without saying anything to the judges about it. Hastings, on the other hand, urged that the people of Calcutta formed but a very small part of that collective body commonly called the world. "The petition itself," said he, "stands upon our records, through which it will find its way to the court of directors, to his majesty's ministers, and in all probability will become public to the whole people of Britain." Francis begged leave to observe that, by the same channel through which the directors, ministers and British public might be informed of the contents of the paper, they would also be informed of the reception it had met with, and the sentence passed upon it by the board. "I therefore hope," said he, "that its being destroyed in the manner proposed will be sufficient to clear the character of the judges, so far as they appear to be attacked in that paper; and, to prevent *any possibility* of the imputations indirectly thrown on the judges from extending beyond this board, I move that the entry of the address from Rajah Nuncomar, entered in our proceedings, be expunged." The will of the majority was acted upon; the entry was expunged; the translation was destroyed, and the original, without any copy being sent to the judges, was publicly burned with all due solemnity, not by the common hangman, for there was none in Calcutta, but by the common gaoler. If Francis could have burned all the minutes in the council now raked up against him it would have been well for him! After reading all these minutes, Sir Elijah Impey said that, notwithstanding the anxiety of Francis* that every memorial of Nuncomar's petition or representation should be destroyed, he possessed an authentic copy of it, with the translation corrected by Hastings, who had given him the copy. "Hastings," continued Impey, "thought it no more than common justice to the judges to give it to me, and, as it was in the secret department of government, he delivered it to me under an oath of secrecy, not to disclose it in India except to the judges: except to them it has not been disclosed to this day, when it is called forth by necessity for my defence." As Hastings was bound by his oath of office to keep secret what passed in the secret department of government, he was guilty

* In his examination before the committee of the whole House on the 16th of April, Francis said:—"My secret predominant motive for proposing to destroy the original paper produced by General Clavering, was to save him, and him alone, from danger to which he had exposed himself by that rash, inconsiderate action; yet the step I took was not immediately taken on my own suggestion. As soon as Mr Hastings proposed that a copy of the paper should be sent to the judges, Colonel Monson started at it, and desired me to go with him to another room. He then said, 'I suppose you see what the governor means. If the judges get possession of the paper, Clavering may be ruined by it.' My answer was, 'Why, what can they do to him?' To that he replied, 'I know not what they can do; but, since they have dipped their hands in blood, what is there they will not do?' He then desired me to move that the original paper be destroyed by the hands of the common hangman."

of perjury in giving the paper to Impey. His binding Impey in an oath of secrecy could not cover the breach of his own oath; the manœuvre was characteristic of the man; the perjury committed was certainly not of a heinous nature; but perjury it nevertheless was, and a breach of official trust and duty, rendered necessary in the eyes of Hastings and of Impey by the infamous proceedings and ill-concealed intentions of Clavering and Francis. At the desire of the House, Sir Elijah Impey afterwards delivered in a fac-simile copy of the original translation of the paper, with Hastings's interlineary corrections. The paper, after enumerating the rank, honours, and high employments of Nuncomar, said, that many English gentlemen had become his enemies, and having no other means to conceal their own actions, revived an old affair which had repeatedly been found to be false: that the prosecutor was a notorious liar, and had been treated as such by the governor-general, who had turned him out of his house; that the English gentlemen had become the aiders and abettors of this notorious liar, and that Lord Impey and the other justices had tried and condemned the writer, Nuncomar, by the English laws, which were contrary to the customs of the country, &c.* Sir Elijah Impey argued that General Clavering's sense of the propriety of allowing no respite must appear from the whole of his conduct, and from the mode in which he treated that paper after he received it. He also cited Clavering's testimony on oath, by which it appeared he did not consider that the prosecution of Mr. Hastings at all depended on the evidence of Nuncomar. If General Clavering thought there were circumstances in the case which ought to render Nuncomar a proper object for mercy, could he have defeated the petition of the unhappy convict, by detaining his paper until it could be of no possible use to him? That paper was no private address to the general, but an address to the board at large, whose sense he would not suffer to be taken on the propriety of recommending him to mercy, as he never produced the paper until days after the execution! If the paper was unsupported then, what new matter had arisen to support it now? If it was not good to obtain mercy for Nuncomar, how could it be good to bring down impeachment and punishment upon Sir Elijah Impey? What could make that a just accusation now, which was held to be false and libellous then? Continuing his *long* speech, Impey closed the horns of a dilemma upon Francis until they went through and through him. "That the paper itself," said he, "should have survived, is hardly more providential for me, than that the gentleman who moved for the condemnation of it, and who expressed his hopes that it would prevent any possibility of the imputations indirectly thrown out against the judges from extending beyond that board, is the only surviving member of that majority. From him who, to prevent its extending beyond that board, had with so much solicitude procured the paper to be expunged from the proceedings, I hope I may be thought to have some claim to expect that these imputations will not be encouraged in England: should, nevertheless, such imputations have been suggested by any member or members of the council (and I am sorry to say that their secret minutes show that there have), I am in the judgment of the House, whether it would not be a precedent of dangerous

* The paper, which was in the first person, went on:—"Taking the evidence of my enemies in proof of my crime, they have condemned me to death. But, by my death, the king's justice will let the actions of no person remain concealed; and, now that the hour of death approaches, I shall not, for the sake of this world, be regardless of the next, but represent the truth to the gentlemen of the council. The forgery of the bond, of which I am accused, never proceeded from me. Many principal people of this country, who were acquainted with my honesty, frequently requested of the judges to suspend my execution till the king's pleasure should be known, but this they refused, and unjustly take away my life. For God's sake, gentlemen of the council, you who are just, and whose words are truth, let me not undergo this injury, but wait the king's pleasure. If I am unjustly put to death, I will, with my family, demand justice in the next life. They put me to death out of enmity, and from partiality to the gentlemen who have betrayed their trust; and, in this case, the thread of life being cut, I, in my last moments, again request that you, gentlemen, will write my case particularly to the just king of England. I suffer, but my innocence will certainly be made known to him."

tendency to admit *secret communications and private informations* in evidence from any persons whomsoever to disavow and contradict their own *solemn official unanimous acts* entered upon public records —on records required by act of parliament to be transmitted to his majesty's ministers as authentic information both of their acts and their reasons for their acts." Sir Elijah said that, as he had been charged as an individual, so he had defended himself as an individual. "But," added he, "though called to answer as for acts done by me singly, those acts not only were not, but could not have been, done by me individually: I was one member sitting in a court consisting of four members; all the four members concurred in the acts imputed to me; my voice singly and by itself could have had no operation; I might have been overruled by a majority of three to one. I was not *more* concerned in the proceedings than any other judge; I was *less* so than two. Informations had been laid against the criminal before two of the judges [Lemaistre and Hyde], who, by committing him for felony, had applied this law to his case without my knowledge or privity. I was, indeed, applied to by the council as to the mode of his confinement; I had no right to revise the acts of the judges; their authority was equal to mine; I did what humanity required; I made the strictest inquiries of the pundits, as to the effect of his imprisonment on his caste and religion; I learned they could not be hurt. I gave directions to the sheriff that he should have the best accommodations that the gaol would afford; the gaoler and his family quitted their apartments and gave them up to him; I directed that every indulgence, consistent with his safe custody, should be granted him. Those only were my individual acts, and they appear on the report of your committee. If it had been just so to do, it was not I, but the *court*, which must have afforded protection to the criminal because he was the accuser of Mr. Hastings; it was not I, but the court, that must have quashed the indictment; it was not I, but the court, which retained the prosecution; had Sir Robert Chambers been overruled, it was not I, but the court, that could have overruled him; it was not I, but the whole court, that rejected the appeal (if there was an appeal),—that refused the respite, and carried the sentence into execution. ALL signed the calendar; I executed no act of authority as a magistrate, but sitting in open court, assisted by all the judges: even those acts which are particularly objected to me, as mine individually, though I was only the channel of the court to pronounce them, are not my individual acts; as chief justice, I presided in the court, and was the mouth of the court; all questions put, all observations made by me, were with the judges sitting on my right hand and on my left; those questions and those observations were not mine, but the questions and observations of the court. I did not presume to make observations in my summing up to the jury, without having first communicated with the judges, and taken their unanimous opinion on every article. . . . . As no act is imputable solely to me, so there is no motive in the whole charge assigned for my conduct that is not equally applicable to every other judge: nor is there one allegation that exonerates the other judges, and applies them specifically to me; if they are true with regard to me, they are true as applied to every judge of the court. The notoriety of the injustice of the proceedings applies to all, and gives an equal ground of conviction that all the judges were in a combination to sacrifice an innocent man for the purpose of screening Mr. Hastings from justice: all must have shown an equally determined purpose against the life of the criminal; all had equal knowledge of the accusation, the proceedings in council, and the conduct of Mr. Hastings; all knew equally the credit of the witnesses, and the infamy of the unnamed witness. There is no stage of the business where they are not all as much implicated in the motives as I could be; yet I alone am called to answer, whilst they, if this charge be true, are still administering justice in Bengal notoriously branded with infamy, are still judging on the lives of men with hands stained with blood! Though I say this as necessary

to my defence, I most solemnly protest, and most anxiously request, that it may clearly be understood that I do not entertain the most distant wish that any judge of the supreme court should meet with the same fate which I have experienced, after long and faithful services in so inhospitable a climate, in their decline of life, and be dragged from their tribunals to appear as criminals at this bar."

This defence, which occupied two days in the delivery, produced a deep and lasting impression. Pitt was heard to affirm that, if he had been placed in the same situation, he could not say but that he should have acted precisely as Sir Elijah Impey had done. It was quite clear that the prosecution must speedily be dropped. With the exception of the documents included in it, Sir Elijah had delivered his defence as an extempore speech, not reading it drily and heavily, as Hastings had done. Accordingly, when asked whether he would leave the House a copy of it, he said he could not, as he had not written it out, and had spoken hurriedly and under great agitation of feeling; but soon after a full report of the speech appeared, evidently drawn up by himself or under his own superintendence.* On the second day, before Sir Elijah was called in, Francis rose to take notice of a serious charge which had been brought against him, and to move that Sir Elijah should be required to deliver to the House the original paper read by him as the translation of the petition of Nuncomar. "The reason," he said, "why he called for the original paper was, because Sir Elijah had stated at the bar that it was delivered to him by Mr. Hastings, and that it contained alterations in his hand-writing. He wanted, therefore, to see what those alterations were, which he could not unless the original paper was deposited on the table." The premier, the solicitor-general, the master of the rolls, and other gentlemen of the robe, strongly objected to this motion, for which, although supported by Burke and Fox, was at length substituted the amendment, that the Speaker should ask Sir Elijah if he had any objection to produce a *copy* of the paper in question. Sir Elijah, upon being called in, answered that he had no objection. The said paper, and still more the history attaching to it, copied from the records in the India House, tended greatly to incense and irritate a man who was naturally one of the most irritable of mankind. And, indeed, in various other ways, sad havoc was made on the character of Francis in the course of these proceedings against Sir Elijah Impey. When the party friends of Francis were applauding him as the most honourable, upright, and incorruptible of men, Major Scott spoiled the eulogium by speaking of the large fortune which that six years' member of council had brought with him from India; and the allusion produced all the effect intended, as it was universally known that the man who had never held any higher appointment in England than that of clerk in the war-office—and even that appointment he had lost some considerable time before he went to Calcutta—*was now in possession of a splendid revenue.* Scott, too, proposed applying in this instance the searching test which had been originally included in Pitt's India bill. "Before I join in applauding his integrity," said the major, "I require it be proved by the only possible way in which his integrity can be proved. Let him come fairly, boldly, and honestly forward, as Lord Macartney has done; let him state that he left England in debt, that he was six years in India, that his expenses at home and abroad were so much, and his fortune barely the difference between the amount of his expenses and the amount of his salary. When the honourable gentleman shall have done this, I will join the committee with cheerfulness in pronouncing Mr. Francis to be one of the honestest men that ever came from Bengal. But,

* The speech, which together with the copious appendix fills an octavo volume of 244 pages, was published by John Stockdale, and bears the date of 1788. The advertisement states that "the editor of this speech" took accurate notes of it when it was delivered. No editor's name is mentioned. In every part of the book there is internal evidence that the editor must have been Sir Elijah Impey himself, or some person employed by him, and working under his immediate direction or dictation. A good deal of the matter in the appendix could only have been furnished at the time by Sir Elijah; and no editor or bookseller could have arranged that matter, or have furnished the notes and comments upon it and upon the matter contained in the speech.

until he shall submit to this only true test of his integrity, I shall pay no attention to the animated panegyrics of his friends." Francis made no reply, nor ever showed any inclination to submit to such an ordeal. Moreover, it was pretty well known that Francis, who as he grew older grew into something very like a miser, was exceedingly fond of money, and capable of many little sordid tricks which are altogether incompatible with the high and generous qualities of that fanciful portrait his party were attempting to draw for him. On this day Sir Elijah Impey claimed the protection of the House against certain libellous public prints, which were daily circulated to injure his cause. He was ordered to produce them the day following, when, upon the motion of Mr. Grenville, they were declared to be scandalous and seditious libels upon the House, and tending to prejudice the minds of the public against an accused individual; and an address was presented to the king to direct the attorney-general to prosecute the publishers. When Sir Elijah had finished his answer to the Nuncomar charge, he submitted to the House that his mind had been so strongly affected, and his health so much impaired by the horror he had felt at the charge of having committed a deliberate legal murder, that he was unequal to the exertion of going into his defence upon the other articles before he was acquitted of the first. He said that the rest were so light in comparison with this, that, if it were decided against him, he was indifferent to their going at once to the bar of the Lords, without any further discussion. To this request Sir Gilbert Elliot readily consented. On the 11th of February, and the following days on which the House sat in committee, Mr. Thomas Farrer, who had acted as counsel to Nuncomar upon his trial, and who was now a member of the House of Commons, was examined as a witness, standing in his place as a member. His evidence in nearly every essential particular confirmed what Impey had himself said. He showed an attested copy of the warrant of commitment for the forgery, which was not signed by Impey, but by Justice Lemaistre and Justice Hyde; he showed that it was impossible to have tried Nuncomar either sooner or later; he declared, in the plainest language, that two of the judges concurred on every point with the chief justice, and that Chambers, after his first doubt as to the statute upon which the prisoner ought to be tried, sat on the bench, silent and to all appearance acquiescent; he spoke, as every one who knew him appears to have done, with the warmest feeling of the character of Mr. Elliot, who had acted as interpreter, and afterwards superintended the publication of the trial; he stated that the civil proceedings against Nuncomar in the court of Dewannee Adaulut were not given in evidence at the trial by either party, and that the reasons why he as counsel for the prisoner did not give them in evidence were, 1. That Nuncomar's witnesses had in several material points contradicted each other. 2. That the plaintiff had expressly charged the instrument in question to be a forgery. 3. That Nuncomar had this alternative offered him by the plaintiff, either to leave the matter to arbitration, or to make oath that his demand was just and the bond no forgery; he appeared to have declined both the one and the other. 4. That when Nuncomar found the court, in consequence of his refusal, were proceeding to judgment, and that he would no longer be allowed to protract the decision by introducing from time to time new witnesses, he had then agreed to arbitration. Farrer also stated that these proceedings in the Dewannee Adaulut had commenced only at the end of 1773, and had terminated on the 9th of June, 1774 (only five months before the arrival of Impey and the supreme court), by the reference to arbitration. He informed the House that the trial for the capital offence had lasted several days, having ended on the 15th of June, or rather on the 16th, about four o'clock in the morning; and that all the proceedings, with the examination and cross-examination of witnesses, had appeared to him fair and unprejudiced. He said that a petition *of appeal* had been drawn up and presented; that this paper was not drawn up by him nor presented by him, but by Mr. Brix, another advocate, who had assisted him in the defence, and that he could not take it upon himself to say that

Mr. Brix had stated to him whether Sir Elijah Impey was present or not when the petition of appeal was presented. Farrer also stated that an attempt was made by himself to induce the jury to recommend the prisoner to the judges for a respite; and that Mr. Robinson, the foreman of the jury, had peremptorily refused to join in such recommendation, upon the grounds that his conscience would not permit it, and that the high opinion he entertained of the judges would not allow him to doubt that, if they thought Nuncomar a proper object of mercy, they would themselves have recommended him for the king's pardon. Farrer produced and read Robinson's letters, as also the original of a petition which was signed by only *one* of the jury of twelve. He said that his next step was to endeavour to ascertain whether the governor-general and council would receive a petition addressed to them, and then enclose it with their recommendation to the four judges. Knowing, as every man in Calcutta did, that it was of no use to apply to the minority (Hastings and Barwell), Farrer resolved to speak with the majority, Clavering, Monson, and Francis, who were all to be at a party given by Lady Anne Monson. He called Francis aside and explained the business to him first. Francis, he said, made no objection, but when they called Clavering and Monson into consultation, Clavering, without hesitation, positively refused to interfere, assigning as his reasons "that it was a private transaction of Nuncomar's own, that it had no relation whatever to the public concerns of the country, which alone he (the general) was sent out to transact, and that he would not make any application in favour of a man who had been found guilty of forgery, nor, indeed, did he think it would do any good." Colonel Monson agreed with the general, and therefore the matter was dropped. Farrer had been told that Nuncomar's son-in-law had afterwards presented a petition either to Impey in person, or had left it at his house, but he was not sure which, and he had only the word of an Hindu for the fact. He read a petition from the native inhabitants of Calcutta, Moorshedabad, and other places, but he believed that it had neither been signed nor presented—that it was not even approved of by the Hindus. He said he had been informed that some of these people had prepared another petition, according to their own ideas, and presented it to the chief justice, but he had never seen it, and in fact knew nothing about it of his own knowledge. Farrer, who had frequently visited Nuncomar in prison, declared that he had never complained of harsh treatment.* He made prominent the fact that *more than seven weeks were allowed to elapse between the sentence and the execution of the prisoner.* Concerning the petition sent by Nuncomar to Clavering the day before the execution, he knew nothing directly or indirectly.

On the 20th of February Mr. Rouse, who had formerly presided in the Dewannee Adaulut, before which the civil cause was brought, and who was now a member of the House of Commons, was examined in his place. The committee also examined Mr. Samuel Tolfrey, who was under-sheriff of Calcutta at the time of the arrest, trial, and execution, and Mr. James Durnford, who had been clerk to Mr. Justice Lemaistre. Durnford said nothing to the point, pleading that deficiency of memory which is common to unwilling witnesses; but Tolfrey spoke out with fullness and apparent frankness, and his depositions tended to strengthen the case of Sir Elijah. When asked whether Francis had ceased all friendly intercourse with Impey after the condemnation of Nuncomar, he said that he certainly had not, but that he believed there was, for a time, a suspension of friendly visits between them on account of a civil suit against Francis in the supreme court, *i. e.* the crim. con. action brought by Le Grand against Francis. Tolfrey could speak with some confidence on the latter subject, as he was attorney to Francis in that cause. He declared that *the verdict in that case was given contrary to the opinion of Sir Robert Chambers;*

* This witness also said emphatically, "I never heard, to the best of my recollection, *any complaint of the want of humanity in Sir Elijah Impey, or in any other of the judges.*"

that Justice Lemaistre was then dead; *that Justice Hyde and the chief justice agreed in the judgment, the reasons for which Sir Elijah gave at full length, to the evident dissatisfaction of Francis, the defendant.**

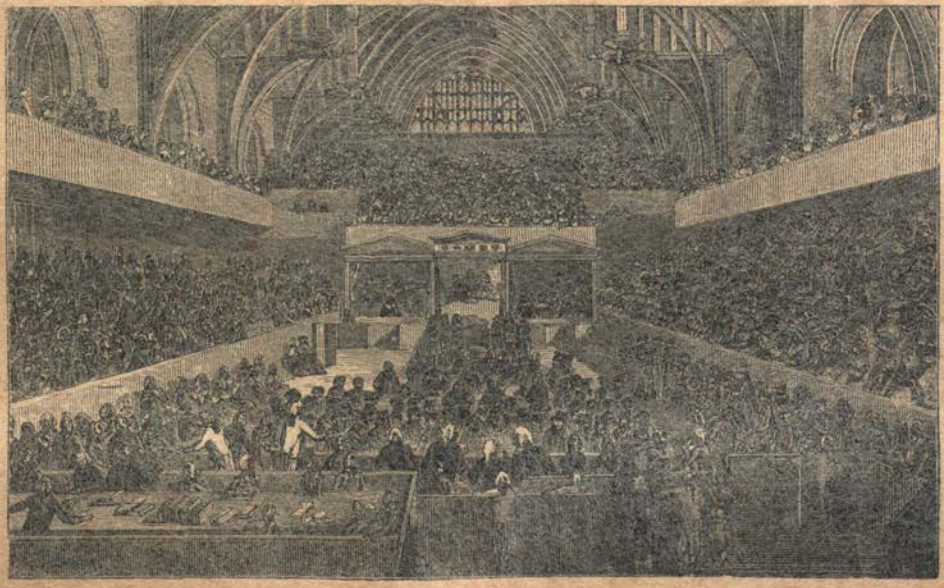
On the 28th of April, all the evidence being gone through, Sir Gilbert Elliot began his reply to the defence of Sir Elijah Impey. After a very long speech the committee was adjourned to the 7th of May. On the 7th Sir Gilbert resumed his reply, and finished it on the 9th, which was the next day of sitting. The defence of Sir Elijah was undertaken by Sir Richard Sutton, Mr. D. Pulteney, the attorney and solicitor general, and the chancellor of the exchequer, who was exceedingly severe, as he had been before, on the conduct and motives of Francis. Sir Gilbert Elliot's motion, importing that the first charge had been made good, was supported by Fox, Burke, and Colonel Fullarton; but, upon a division, it was lost by a majority of eighteen, the numbers being 73 against 55. On the 27th of May, the day appointed for the committee to sit again, upon the usual motion that the Speaker do now leave the chair, the attorney-general opposed the motion, on the ground that the next article of charge, the Patna cause, was then depending before the privy council, and likely to come speedily to a hearing. After a short conversation, in which Pitt again expressed a strong conviction in favour of Sir Elijah, the motion was negatived even without a division, and the further consideration of the charges was adjourned to that day three months. And thus ended the whole prosecution of the late chief justice of Bengal. The Patna charge came to nothing before the privy council; nor was there ever any attempt made to press any of the other charges or to revive the impeachment in any way whatsoever. It has been said that some of those charges, though far from being of so heinous a character, might possibly have been more difficult to explain than the Nuncomar charge; but, as his accusers never gave Sir Elijah the opportunity of meeting them in the House of Commons or before any public tribunal, it is not safe or fair to say that he might not have been able to give ample explanations of his conduct. As his defence was certainly a triumphant one upon the only charge that was entered upon, the other charges, which were let drop, must at least be considered as "not proven;" —nay more, in ordinary reasoning, Sir Elijah is entitled to the benefit of the doubt that he might, if his prosecutors had persevered, have been enabled to *disprove* them.

* For the crim. con. trial see ante, Chap. xix. The conduct of Sir Robert Chambers in this particular may account for the preference and favour afterwards shown to him by Francis, and by those who took their cue from Francis. In the libellous book of Travels which goes under the name of 'Mackintosh,' and in numerous other publications, Chambers is held up as the most upright of judges—as a contrast, in integrity, humanity, and all other virtues, to Sir Elijah Impey.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

MEANWHILE the impeachment of Hastings, in which that of Impey was a mere episode or interlude, had been carried on with all possible activity. A few days before the Christmas holidays the Lords informed the Commons that Warren Hastings, Esquire, had delivered in answers to the articles of impeachment, a copy of which answers they sent them for the use of the Lower House. On the 5th of December (1787), after the answers were read short, Burke moved that they should be referred to a committee. This was agreed to. The speaker then desired him to name his committee; upon which, after he had himself been named as the first member by Mr. Pitt, he instantly named Francis as the second. But, when the q estion was put, this motion was negatived by a majority of more than four to one, the numbers being 97 noes against 23 ayes. Burke hereupon declared that he scarcely knew how to proceed without the valuable assistance of Francis, and that he felt the cause to be in some degree damned by this act of the House. So fully was he convinced of the great utility of the assistance of his honourable friend, that he should feel himself, who knew the subject as well as most men, so exceedingly crippled and enfeebled without the advantage of his honourable friend's superior information, that, when the day for naming the next committee should come, he would again appeal to the sense of the House, and try to have his honourable friend reinstated. Meanwhile he proceeded to nominate the rest of the committee, which consisted of the same persons as the preceding one, with the omission of Francis and the addition of Wilbraham, Fitzpatrick, and Courtenay, and which was armed with the usual powers. Fox said that they were rejecting from the committee the man the most proper to be upon it; but, as the gentlemen on the ministerial benches had thus created a vacancy, he thought it but proper that they should fill it up with some person well acquainted with India affairs; and he archly suggested that the leading member of the India Board (Dundas) would be the proper man. Neither Dundas nor any of his friends condescended to notice Fox's suggestion. Two days after this Burke brought up from the committee a replication to the answers of Hastings, in which the Commons, in the usual form, averred their charges against the said Warren Hastings to be true, and declared their readiness to prove the same against him, at such convenient time and place as should be appointed for that purpose. On the next day of sitting this replication was ordered to be carried by Mr. Burke up to the Lords, who appointed Wednesday, the 13th of February (1788), for proceeding upon the trial in Westminster-Hall. It then became necessary to appoint a new committee of managers; and after it had been agreed to, on the motion of Burke, that the committee to whom it was referred to consider the answer of Warren Hastings should be the said managers, Fox rose and moved that Philip Francis, Esquire, should be added to the committee. He earnestly implored the House to reconsider their former vote. He said the Commons, or their committee, were not now acting as the judges of Mr. Hastings; they were not even sitting in the character of a grand jury to decide whether or not a bill of indictment should be found against him; they were now become his prosecutors. Whatever objection might be urged to Mr. Francis as the judge of Mr. Hastings, there could be no objection to his appearing as his accuser. Fox again eulogised Francis as a man of immaculate

virtue, and used many arguments to prove his peculiar fitness for a place in the committee. He was followed by Wyndham, who chimed in with the panegyric and insisted that no reasonable ground could be laid for the rejection of Francis. Pitt, who was not generally supposed to have much feeling of any kind, though he doubtless had more than his cold stiff manners betrayed, contended that this was not a question of argument, but a question of feeling. He thought that it was delicate and proper for the House to take from the impeachment every appearance of improper motives, and to exclude from the committee the only person in the House that had been concerned in a personal combat with Mr. Hastings. He said that it was impossible that the prosecution could be injured through the absence of Francis, who had already given all the materials he could furnish, and would be always at hand not merely to be consulted, but also to be examined at the bar. Grenville took the same view of the case, and supported it with nearly the same arguments. Francis rose to declare that, though he had quarrelled with Hastings for six long years, and had fought him, and been wounded by him almost mortally, the quarrelling and the fighting had all arisen out of public matters, and that therefore he was not to be considered as the private personal enemy of Hastings. He made rather a long speech, and immediately left the House, who decided that he should not be of the committee by 122 voices against 60. A few days after this vote a letter was addressed to Francis by the managers of the impeachment, in which, after declaring their opinion that they would show very little regard to their honour, to their duty, or to the effectual execution of their trust, if they omitted any means left in their power to obtain the most beneficial use of the knowledge possessed by a person whose conduct and character appeared to them in all respects to merit the highest commendation, they concluded by saying —"We have expressed sentiments in which we are unanimous, and which, with pride and pleasure, we attest under all our signatures, entreating you to favour us as frequently as you can with your attendance in the committee; and you shall have due notice of the days on which your advice and instructions may be more particularly necessary." We believe, nevertheless, we may say that the common feeling of mankind since has gone along with the vote of the House; and that Francis has been generally thought to have shown quite as much moral obtuseness as intellectual acuteness in his conduct on this occasion. "His local knowledge and his habits of business," says a recent writer, "were of invaluable service to the managers: he exerted his whole energies in a cause so near his heart from every principle and from all personal feelings; nor could he ever be taught to understand why the circumstance of his being the private enemy of the man, as well as the public adversary of the governor, should be deemed an obstacle to his taking this part. The motives of delicacy, which so many thought that he ought to have felt on this subject, were wholly beyond his conception: for he argued that the more he disliked Mr. Hastings, the wider his grounds of quarrel with him were, the more natural was it that he should be his assailant; and the reason for the House of Commons excluding him by their vote from a place among the managers surpassed his powers of comprehension. Had the question been of making him a judge in the cause, or of appointing him to assist in the defence, he could well have understood how he should be deemed disqualified; but that a prosecutor should be thought the less fit for the office when he was the more likely strenuously to discharge its duties of bringing the accused to justice and exacting punishment for his offences, because he hated him on private as well as public grounds, was a thing to him inconceivable. It never once occurred to him that an impeachment by the Commons is like the proceedings of an inquest; that the managers represent the grand jury acting for the nation, and actuated only by the love of strict justice; and that to choose for their organ one who was also known to be actuated by individual passions would have been as indecorous as for the prosecutor in a common indictment to sit



Trial of Warren Hastings.—From a Painting by Dayes.

No. 25.

upon the grand jury, and accompany the foreman in presenting his bill to the court."*

In the mean time the magnificent old hall, which the second of our Norman kings had built for very different purposes, was prepared and decorated as a grand court of justice. Benches, stages, and boxes were erected, and the grey walls were hung with scarlet. On the appointed day (the 13th of February), at eleven o'clock in the morning, all the magnates of the land began to crowd within those walls. Her majesty and her daughters, with the princesses Elizabeth, Augusta, and Mary, took their places in the Duke of Newcastle's gallery before the peers arrived. Near one hundred and seventy lords, robed in gold and ermine, and marshalled by the heralds under Garter King-at-Arms, walked in solemn procession from their own house to Westminster Hall, the junior baron present, Lord Heathfield (the excellent old Eliot, who had defended Gibraltar), leading the way, and the procession being closed by the Duke of Norfolk (Earl Marshal of England), by the great dignitaries, by the brothers and sons of the king, and last of all by the Prince of Wales. Above two hundred of the Commons followed their Speaker into the hall; but, as very few of them, except Charles Fox, Burke, and the rest of the managers, were in full dress, and as some of them were in boots, those who had critical eyes in these matters complained that they made but a shabby appearance. The managers were attended by the counsel for the impeachment, Drs. Scott and Lawrence, and Messrs. Mansfield, Pigot, Burke, and Douglas. The seats for the Commons were covered with green cloth; the rest of the vast room being all "one red." The twelve judges, in their dresses of state, attended to give advice on points of law. Galleries were set apart for the accommodation of ambassadors and envoys, for distinguished foreigners, and for distinguished Englishmen who had reached fame and fortune by different paths. Gibbon, the historian of the Roman Empire, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, Dr. Parr, Mr. (afterwards Sir James) Mackintosh, with other men of note, were present in that imposing scene. And there were other ladies besides the queen and her daughters. The Duchess of Gloucester, the niece of Horace Walpole, and once the wife of the honest Earl Waldegrave, was there with her young son (the late Duke of Gloucester); Mrs. Fitzherbert was there, with royal accommodations, and looking queen-like; her friend and champion, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, was there with a crowd of beauties about her; and Sheridan's musical and beautiful wife was conspicuous among them all. Mrs. Siddons also was there, looking, even as a spectatress, the queen of tragedy. When all were seated, the sergeant-at-arms made proclamation, commanding silence, and called upon Warren Hastings, esquire, to come into court. Hastings advanced, accompanied by Sulivan and Sumner, his two bail, and, kneeling at the bar in the box assigned to him, he was ordered to rise. Precedents had been diligently studied; none of the old forms were omitted, and they all made a deep impression. After a pause the sergeant-at-arms made proclamation again, that, whereas charges of high crimes and misdemeanors had been exhibited by the honourable the House of Commons, in the name of themselves and of all the Commons of Great Britain, against Warren Hastings, esquire, all persons concerned were to take notice that he now stood upon his trial, and that they might come forward and make good the said charges. And when this was done Lord Chancellor Thurlow, with a form and face well adapted to represent the inflexible severity of the laws, then rolled out in his sonorous manner:—"Warren Hastings, you stand at the bar of this court charged with high crimes and misdemeanors, a copy of which has been delivered to you; you have been allowed counsel, and a long time has been given to you for your defence; but this is not to be considered as a particular indulgence to you, as it arose from the necessity of the case, the crimes with which you are charged being stated to have been committed in a distant place. These charges contain the most weighty allega-

* Character of Sir Philip Francis, in Lord Brougham's Historical Sketches of Statesmen.

tions, and they come from the highest authority: this circumstance, however, though it carries with it the most serious importance, is not to prevent you from making your defence in a firm and collected manner, in the confidence that as a British subject you are entitled to, and will receive, full justice from a British court." Hastings replied, both firmly and briefly, that he came to that high tribunal equally impressed with a confidence in his own integrity and in the justice of the court before which he stood. The clerks of the court then proceeded to read the charges and the answers, which they did as long as they had daylight; but about a quarter-past five, when they had only got to the end of the seventh charge and answer, the lord chancellor moved that the lords should adjourn to their own chamber of parliament, and their lordships accordingly withdrew in the order in which they had come, and the assembly broke up. The next day the reading of the charges and answers was continued; and on the next, the third day of the trial, Burke rose to deliver, or to begin, his opening speech, which occupied four days—the 15th, 16th, 18th, and 19th of February. Although the length of it must have wearied some people almost to death, and although a very considerable portion of it must have been above the capacity of most of that brilliant audience, there were parts and passages that charmed and excited, and terrified and filled with indignation, and produced all the effects attributed to the most successful and triumphant oratory of ancient times. Mrs. Siddons is said to have been as much affected as she affected others by her wonderful acting on the stage. Ladies fainted in the galleries, and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in convulsions: sobs and tears, which are said not all to have proceeded from the gentler sex, were heard and seen in nearly every part of the hall: even Thurlow seemed at moments to be affected. The orator had not reflected on the amplification and exaggeration common to all Oriental people, who neither see with our [illegible]yes nor describe with our tongues; who [illegible]at every thing as if through a mag[illegible]g lens, and who heighten in describ[illegible]one sense what they have falsely seen with another. This is the case even when they are subjected to no extraordinary excitement, or are agitated by no violent passion: every one that knows anything of the East must be aware of this unvarying spirit of exaggeration in all moods and humours, and in the most trite and self-evident matters; but only let the more violent passions, the hatred and the revenge of these Easterns be inflamed, and there is no calculable limit to the range this spirit will take. Some of the Indian ryots had been harshly, and perhaps in some instances barbarously, treated by other natives employed in collecting the revenue. These ryots had afterwards been encouraged by the agents of Francis and Clavering to raise complaints, and their tongues, being once loosened, were sure not to stop so long as they left a monstrosity unmentioned. Francis, who had not been, while in India, scrupulous enough to authenticate or examine these horrible tales, told them all to Burke as if upon undoubted authority; and the orator introduced the essence of them all in his four days' speech, building up a climax of abomination, horror, and guilt out of materials which in good part were only proper for a ghastly Eastern tale of ghouls and ghins, and other monsters. And these were the things which terrified and made to faint the ladies in the galleries. These appeals to the feelings and passions of the auditory were much too frequent; but there was other matter in this grand oration, or series of orations, that was free from the faults of exaggeration, and that was soberly sublime—there was matter showing a wonderful range of knowledge, a high statesmanlike philosophy, and a beautiful spirit of philanthropy and love. He astonished even those who best knew him and the subject by the vast extent and minuteness of his information, the variety of his resources, and the lucid order in which he arranged the whole for the support of his object. The sober and the best parts of the oration were not, however, those which were the most admired by hearers who went there to have their feelings excited and not their judgment convinced. In the most terrible passages Burke's own excitement was as great as any that

he produced in others. In detailing the cruelties of Debi Sing, on the third day, he became almost convulsed himself; he dropped his head upon his hands, and, for some moments, was unable to proceed: he recovered sufficiently to go on a little further, but, being obliged to cease speaking twice at short intervals, the Prince of Wales, to relieve him, moved the adjournment of the court. "For half an hour," said Hastings himself, "I looked up at the orator in a reverie of wonder; and, during that space, I actually felt myself the most culpable man on earth: but I recurred to my own bosom, and there found a consciousness that consoled me under all I heard and all I suffered." In pronouncing his peroration, on the fourth day, Burke raised his voice to such a pitch as seemed to shake the walls and roof of the antique hall. "Therefore," said he, "it is with confidence that, ordered by the Commons,

"I impeach Warren Hastings, esquire, of high crimes and misdemeanors.

"I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed.

"I impeach him in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonoured.

"I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose laws, rights, and liberties he has subverted, whose properties he has destroyed, whose country he has laid waste and desolate.

"I impeach him in the name and by virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

"I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed, in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.

"And I conjure this high and sacred Court to let not these pleadings be heard in vain!"

As soon as the agitation had somewhat subsided Fox rose to address their lordships respecting the course of proceeding to be followed on the trial: he said it was the wish of the committee to proceed to a conclusion, on both sides, upon each article separately, before they opened another article; that is, to open and adduce evidence to substantiate one charge at a time, to hear the prisoner's defence and evidence upon that charge, and afterwards to reply; and to proceed in the same manner with the rest of the articles, one after the other. This was the course adopted in the House of Commons with regard to the charges against Sir Elijah Impey, and it was adopted at Sir Elijah's own request. But Hastings and his legal advisers preferred the opposite course; and, when the lord chancellor called upon Hastings's counsel to know whether the mode proposed by Fox would be agreeable to them, they answered in the negative. The chancellor then intimated to the committee that their lordships would be glad to know the reasons which induced the managers to call upon the court to adopt that mode. Fox immediately stated that in a cause of such magnitude and complexity, the mode proposed appeared absolutely necessary, and was calculated to prevent confusion, to aid their lordships' memory, and to enable them to form a more distinct view of the merits of the charge and defence upon each separate article than could possibly be done by running over all the articles before concluding upon any. He mentioned the cases of the earls of Strafford and Middleton as precedents. He urged that, if the mode adopted for the defence should be the ordinary mode of procedure among lawyers, their lordships must be called upon to decide upon evidence after they had forgotten the greater part of it; and that such a mass of matter would be offered all at once to their minds as must confound them. The chancellor next called upon Hastings's counsel—three barristers of note—Law, afterwards Lord Ellenborough and chief justice of the King's Bench; Dallas, afterwards chief justice of the Common Pleas; and Plomer, afterwards vice-chancellor and master of the rolls. These learned gentlemen argued that the mode proposed by Fox was contrary to the practice of all courts of justice, and was inconsistent with all principles of equity, as it subjected the defendant to many obvious and most manifest disadvantages. As for the precedents quoted by Fox, they maintained that in both cases the mode of proceeding was

regulated by mutual consent of the parties. Law took this early opportunity of condemning the violent language which Burke had used against Hastings. "The defendant," said he, "has been loaded with terms of such calumny and reproach as since the days of Sir Walter Raleigh were never used at the bar of this House." Fox interrupting him, said, that, vested with a great trust by the House of Commons, he could not sit still and hear such language applied to an accusation which that House, in the prosecution of high crimes, had carried to the bar of the competent court. The lords then retired to their own House, and an order was made that they should be summoned to take the matter of the proceedings into their consideration on the Thursday following. On that day Thurlow left the Woolsack, and, after pronouncing an eulogium on Burke's great speech in the hall,* declared that, if the crimes charged upon the defendant could be proved, no punishment their lordships could inflict would be adequate to his guilt. But he then decidedly took the part of Hastings and his counsel, saying that what they claimed was no indulgence, but a right; that his imagination could not conceive any other possible mode of defending Mr. Hastings than that which his counsel had proposed; that the articles were so intimately blended and mixed up with one another, that he would defy any man living to separate them; that they comprised the whole of Mr Hastings's government for a long series of years, and that the merits or demerits of particular parts might depend upon the various relations they bore to each other, and upon the construction put upon the great whole. That other great law lord, Loughborough, who always called black what Thurlow called white, took the side of Fox and the managers, and spoke at great length to show that the mode of procedure they proposed was the best, and that the high court of parliament was not to be shackled by the rules of the courts below. He then moved that their lordships should agree with the proposition as stated by the managers. Lord Stormont and Lord Grantley replied to Loughborough; the Duke of Norfolk endeavoured to support his arguments; but upon a division the motion was negatived by 88 against 33. When the court met again in the hall, the lord chancellor informed the managers that they must produce the whole of their charges, with the evidence upon each, before the prisoner should be called upon for his defence. After some complaints against his decision, Fox, in a speech which lasted five hours, opened the Benares charge, down to the expulsion of Cheyte Sing; and Mr. Grey followed up and completed the charge on the succeeding day. Several days were then spent in reading papers and hearing witnesses, there being various long disputes as to what evidence ought to be received and what rejected. Anstruther then summed up the evidence admitted, and commented on it as establishing the charge. The Court did not meet again till the 15th April, which was the fourteenth day of the trial. Then Mr. Adam opened the next charge relating to the Begums of Oude; and on the 15th Mr. Pelham continued the same subject, endeavouring chiefly to refute the defence of that part of his conduct which had been put in by Hastings. The sixteen following days were consumed in reading and examining evidence; and it was not until Tuesday, the 3rd of June, that Sheridan began to sum up the evidence, and apply it in proof of the charge. This was another of the grand displays of Sheridan; but it seems to be generally admitted that his speech was far inferior to the one he had delivered on the same subject in the House of Commons. Yet he had evidently spoiled it in labouring to make it grander and finer. His performance, however, attracted a fuller audience than had yet assembled in the hall: it lasted three days, and the court was crowded to suffocation the whole of that time. It is said that as much as fifty guineas were paid for a single seat. Of the fragments

* "Their lordships," said Thurlow, "all know the effect of that speech upon the auditors, many of whom had not to that moment, and perhaps never would, recover from the shock it had occasioned." The chill atmosphere of the immense old hall, at any rate, proved fatal to many of those who attended. Among others, poor Gainsborough caught a cold at the trial, which aggravated other disorders, and carried him to his grave.

that remain of the speech there are few that convey any notion of the fascinating effect which it certainly exercised over those who heard it from Sheridan's own lips.

The prorogation of parliament was now at hand, and no more work was done in the hall. Of twenty charges only two had been heard, and these remained to be answered in form by Hastings and his counsel. In the meantime Mr. Burgess had moved in the House of Commons, "That an account of the money issued from the exchequer for the discharge of the expenses incurred in the impeachment should be laid before the House." The managers made some objection to the motion, which they said they considered merely as an attempt by the friends of Mr. Hastings to vex and impede the committee in the prosecution. The motion, however, was carried, and the account of the expenses was laid upon the table. Exclusive of the buildings or erections in Westminster Hall, they amounted to 4300*l.* The trial had already cost Hastings a much larger sum. Burgess again rose to observe that the account submitted to the House was incomplete, and did not convey all the information wanted. He demanded to know how the money issued had been expended, and he moved that the solicitors to the impeachment should lay a particular account of the expenditure before the House. This motion was supported by Pitt, who was violently assailed thereupon by the managers. They accused him of seeking to obstruct and render unpopular measures in which he had himself concurred. The motion, however, was agreed to without a division, and the solicitors' accounts were produced the very next day by Burke. As reports had got abroad that many men were making a most profitable job of the impeachment, and that enormous fees were given to the counsel for the prosecution, and as no notice was taken of the solicitors' accounts after they had been produced, the managers, a few nights afterwards, called upon Mr. Burgess to proceed with that inquiry. Burgess then declared that the accounts were still vague and unsatisfactory, and that he should therefore move "that the solicitors should give in an account stating specifically to whom and on what account the several sums had been paid." The motion was seconded by Sir William Dolben. The managers declared that, as far as regarded themselves, they had nothing to object, but that there were forcible and obvious objections to the present motion. The House, they said, had solemnly determined that Mr. Hastings should be impeached; they had appointed a committee of managers and armed them with a variety of powers, including that of acting as a *secret committee;* and could the House now demand a public account and disclosure of all the private grounds of their conduct? They asserted that such a measure was unprecedented, and had never been attempted nor dreamed of in any great prosecution; that the charges already incurred in employing counsel were remarkably moderate, the fees paid being in fact shamefully inadequate to the services performed; and that no unnecessary expense whatever had been incurred. They said if more money had been spent more good might have been done: *secret services,* for example, might have been procured by means of money, and they thought secret services very necessary in such a case; an argument, we think, of very dangerous tendency; for, if a bountiful market for secret services had been opened, it would almost inevitably have become a market for false witnesses. Pitt again supported Burgess, declaring that he thought it necessary that the House should know how the money was spent, and have the power of checking the expenditure if they found it in any case excessive or unnecessary. The managers withdrew before the division; and Burgess's motion was carried by 60 against only 13. The solicitors' accounts were laid upon the table, but several days passed without any notice being taken of them. When called upon by the managers to give his opinion of these lawyers' bills, Burgess said that he had done his duty, and that the papers were now before the House, who might judge for themselves: he hinted, however, that there were still doubts upon his mind as to the accounts. The managers called upon him afresh, insisting that he should

either act upon his doubts, or get some other gentleman to state his doubts for him—that the matter, after what had passed, could not be let drop without further investigation. Thus pulled from his seat, Burgess gave notice of a motion on the subject; and a few days after he moved that the solicitors should continue to present from time to time an account of the expenses incurred in the impeachment. In his speech his doubts came out. He doubted whether the House had really authorised the managers to employ counsel; he doubted whether there was any precedent for their employing counsel; and he doubted whether there was any peculiar difficulty in the present prosecution that rendered the assistance of counsel necessary. The managers said in reply that, if no precedent could be found for employing counsel, it should be remembered that the present was a remarkable case, in which the managers were left without the advice and assistance of the great law officers; and that, though they had great confidence in the legal knowledge of several of their own committee—several, in fact, were regular-trained lawyers—they did not choose, in a cause of such magnitude, for the proper management of which they were responsible, to proceed without the sanction of learned persons in actual practice. Pitt doubted whether there was any absolute necessity for their employing, besides ordinary counsel, *two* civilians. To this they answered that the services of both those doctors were indispensable in such a cause, and that one of them (Dr. Lawrence) was eminently useful from his deep and perfect knowledge of the subject. As Mr. Burgess doubted whether there were not some errors in the accounts, the managers proposed that the solicitors should be called in and examined; but the previous question was carried against this proposition, and so the discussion ended. It will not perhaps be very uncharitable to draw two inferences —1. That the discussions were really brought on, not out of any regard to the public purse, but in order to benefit Hastings, by encouraging doubts and insinuations against his prosecutors, who counted in their number at least two men who enjoyed very indifferent reputations in money matters. 2. That the discussions tended materially to keep down the growth of the law expenses by drawing public attention in that direction, and by establishing the rule that the solicitors should present their accounts from time to time, drawn up in a clear and specific manner.

The occupation and excitement produced by the Regency Bill of 1788-9, and then by the recovery of the king, proved very disadvantageous to the progress of Hastings's impeachment. Moreover, the grand spectacle in Westminster Hall had lost its attraction and novelty. On the 3rd of February, 1789, Hastings had presented a petition to the Lords complaining of the great hardships to which the extraordinary duration of the trial had subjected him. He mentioned the death of several of his judges, the long detention of witnesses necessary for his defence, the probability of his being deprived of many of them by various accidents; and he spoke of his health as broken and of his fortune as already wasted by the enormous expenses to which he had been subjected. He reminded their lordships that only two articles of charge out of twenty had as yet been gone through by his accusers; that his expenses had already exceeded 30,000*l.*; and consequently, should his life be continued to the close of the trial, he might find himself destitute of the means of defence and even of subsistence, and run the dreadful chance of having his character blasted by unrefuted criminations, there being no possibility of defending himself effectually without money. He implored their lordships to do what in them lay to expedite the trial. It was the 20th of April before the Lords could resume their court in the Hall; and during the prolonged and busy session of parliament they could not sit more than seventeen days. The charge opened to them on the 21st by Burke related to the corrupt receipt of money. In the course of his speech Burke alluded to Nuncomar, and, very indiscreetly, said, "*that Mr. Hastings had murdered Nuncomar by the hand of Sir Elijah Impey.*" After Impey's triumphant defence, and the con-

duct of the House of Commons in regard to him, this was not only irregular, but unpardonable. On the 27th of April Major Scott presented to the Commons a petition from Hastings, who complained of the words used, and charged Burke with introducing a variety of accusations extraneous to the charges which had been found by the House, and by them inserted in the articles of impeachment.* Scott accused Burke of being guilty of *cool*, deliberate, systematic, and *intentional* misrepresentation, imputing to Hastings horrible crimes of which he well knew him to be innocent. Burke called the Major the systematic libeller of the House of Commons, said that no credit was due to his assertions, and that he ought to have been expelled the House long ago. The managers endeavoured to prevent the petition being received, contending that it was irregular and unprecedented; that, if every expression not agreeable to the feelings of the party accused were not fit to be used in a criminal prosecution, there must be an end to such prosecutions; that a practice of petitioning against the accuser would convert him into a species of defendant, and, by creating a diversion, defeat the prosecution of crimes. Fox asked whether the House would suffer the culprit to come forward and object to the mode of proceeding against him? the accused to arraign the conduct of his accusers? Burke said, the power of prosecuting and enforcing the charges against Hastings, under the strict injunction not to use one extraneous word, must be compared to the power given to Shylock to take a pound of flesh upon condition of his not spilling one drop of blood, a task which neither Jew nor Christian could perform. Pitt, on the other side, urged that Hastings, though the object of their accusation, did not cease to be the object of their justice, and therefore ought not to be deprived of the right belonging to every subject, of preferring a petition and stating a grievance to that House. The petition was received without a division, and the subject of it was ordered to be taken into consideration on the 30th. In the meantime the Lords were requested to suspend proceedings on the trial. On the 30th several doubts and difficulties were started on the ministerial side, and had the usual effect of creating delay. Burke offered to withdraw, and to cast himself on the honour and justice of the House; but in so doing he, in substance, repeated the accusation against Impey, and revived the whole story of Nuncomar's having been destroyed in order to screen Hastings. The debate was renewed on the morrow, the 1st of May. Mr. Montague produced and read, as part of his speech, a letter written by Burke to explain and defend his conduct in the Hall. Burke described himself as being, in his capacity of accuser, merely the servant of the House, who had put into his hands a sacred trust. Hastings's petition against the words he had used he described as a stratagem familiar to the politics of Calcutta, for turning the accuser into a defendant, and for diverting inquiry. His letter said, "The House having, upon an opinion of my diligence and fidelity (for they could have no other motive), put a great trust into my hands, *ought to give me an entire credit for the veracity of every fact I affirm or deny*; but, if they fail with regard to me, it is at least in my power to be true to myself. I will not commit myself in an unbecoming contention with the agents of a criminal whom it is my duty to bring to justice. I am a member of a committee of secrecy, and I will not violate my trust by turning myself into a defendant and bringing forward in my own exculpation the evidence which I have prepared for his conviction. I will not let him know on what documents I rely. *I will not let him know who the witnesses for the prosecution are, nor what they have to depose against him*; though I have no sort of doubt of the constancy and integrity of those witnesses, yet because they are men, and men to whom, from my own situation, I owe protection, I ought not to expose them either to temptation or danger. I will not hold them out to be im-

* Besides the death of Nuncomar, Hastings said that Burke had charged him with being concerned in a plot to assassinate the son of the Mogul, with being equally concerned in another plot to murder the son of Meer Jaffier Khan, and with being accessory to the horrible cruelties imputed to Debi Sing.

portuned, or menaced, or discredited, or run down, or possibly to be ruined in their fortunes, by the power and influence of this delinquent, except where the national service supersedes all other considerations. If I must suffer, I will suffer alone. No man shall fall a sacrifice to a feeble sensibility on my part, that at this time of day might make me impatient of those libels, which by despising through so many years, I have at length obtained the honour of being joined in commission with this committee, and becoming an humble instrument in the hands of public justice." In favour of Hingsast it was proposed that evidence should be taken to prove the words of which he complained in his petition; and after some contention it was agreed that evidence should be heard, and it was moved that the short-hand writer who had taken notes of the trial should be called in. Fox and Sir Grey Cooper objected that this last proposal was contrary to the uniform practice of parliament, and a very improper method of proving words spoken by a member of that House; that it was contrary to rule to permit words spoken by a member to be noticed in that House except by a member; and that such words must also be taken down at the moment, and the objection to them stated, in order to allow the person uttering them an opportunity of explaining his meaning. They said, the House was now for the first time going to call in a third party as witness of words spoken in their own presence, a precedent that might lead to the most serious consequences. These objections had so much weight that a motion was made and carried for appointing a committee to search for precedents. On the 4th of May the said committee reported that there were no precedents of any complaints of words spoken by managers for the Commons in Westminster Hall. The managers then objected as strongly as before to the examination of any short-hand writer; but they were defeated upon a division by 115 against 66, and the short-hand writer who had taken down Burke's words charging Impey again with the murder of Nuncomar, and other foul deeds, was called to the bar and gave evidence to that effect. There was then another debate as to whether all the particulars complained of in Hastings's petition should be inquired into, or whether the House might select any particular part. Pitt thought that no attention ought to be paid to any words spoken by Burke in Westminster Hall the preceding year, as the complaint had been so long deferred; and that they ought rather to confine themselves to the words recently spoken about Nuncomar. The managers complained that this would be unfair and arbitrary; but the House adopted the course recommended by the minister. Then a fresh difference arose as to the extent of the examination upon the particular point of complaint which had been selected by the House. Fox and the other managers insisted that the whole of that part of Burke's speech which related to Nuncomar ought to be produced, as necessary to elucidate the nature of the words complained of. The ministerialists, on the contrary, professed to be of opinion that it was only necessary to ask the witness whether Burke had made use of those express words. Fox, who seemed to put his whole soul into the cause of his friend, condemned in the most passionate manner the indignity and injustice with which the House were treating Burke. At length it was agreed that some part of the speech preceding the injurious words should be read. When this was done, the Marquess of Graham, one of the lords of the treasury, moved "That the said words were not authorised by any proceedings of that House." Fox said that he could not object to this motion, as it conveyed no censure, and as, after it should pass, it would be fully competent for him, Mr. Burke, or any other manager, to repeat the words complained of. Sheridan and Wyndham spoke to the same effect. On the other side it was represented by Pitt that, though the motion meant no direct censure, yet it implied that the managers had exceeded the powers the House had intrusted them with. This again called up Fox, who intreated the House to deal with openness and candour. If they meant to censure the managers of the impeachment, the House, he said, ought to change them and appoint others. The House, he insisted, could not, consistently

with its own honour, continue them in the management, nor would they consent to remain in that elevated situation under an imputed censure of their conduct. But if the motion meant no more than the words conveyed, they should feel no hesitation to pursue, upon any similar occasion, precisely the same line of conduct. In consequence of these declarations the Marquess of Graham rose to make the censure of the House direct and explicit, moving an addition to his former motion, to the effect that the words used by Burke as to the murder of Nuncomar ought not to have been spoken. This roused all the passion of Fox, who, in a long and eloquent speech, denounced the conduct of the minister and his adherents as an iniquitous interference with the ends of justice, and an atrocious wrong done to one of the best, wisest, and greatest of men; and he moved as an amendment to the amendment the addition of the following words—"Although in the charge exhibited by the Commons of Great Britain, upon which the House voted the impeachment, there are the following words, namely, 'That the evidence of this man (meaning Nuncomar) not having been entered into at the time when it might and ought to have been done by the said Warren Hastings, remains justly in force against him, and is not abated by the capital punishment of the said Nuncomar, but rather confirmed by the time and circumstances in which the accuser of the said Warren Hastings suffered death,' and to which charge the said Warren Hastings, at the bar of this House, made the following answer, namely, 'To the malicious part of this charge, which is the condemnation of Nuncomar for a forgery, I do declare in the most solemn and unreserved manner that I had no concern, either directly or indirectly, in the apprehending, prosecuting, or execution of Nuncomar;' and although the managers who have been appointed by the House to arrange the evidence and enforce the charges against the said Warren Hastings are of opinion that the aforesaid declarations used by the said Right Hon. Edmund Burke were essentially necessary to the support of one of the principal charges voted by this House." Fox was answered by Pitt; and, after his amendment had been negatived without a division, Graham's motion was carried by a majority of a little more than two to one.* Mr. Bouverie immediately moved "That the thanks of this House be given to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, and the rest of the managers, for their exertions and assiduity in the prosecution of the impeachment against Warren Hastings, Esquire, and that they be desired to persevere in the same." This was objected to by the master of the rolls, and the motion of course was lost.† That night the managers held a meeting, at which it was seriously discussed whether they should not throw up their charge altogether; and on the following morning they held another meeting, at which Burke, though not without difficulty, induced them to agree to proceed. Burke, it is said, represented to his colleagues that Hastings's petition, with all that had followed it, was nothing but a stratagem intended to drive them from their duty as accusers, and so to screen the accused. On the next day he opened his speech in Westminster Hall with a comparison of the relative situations of himself and the prisoner at the bar; and related all that had passed in the Commons. He said that he did not mean to question the justice of the late votes and decisions of that House, although he must complain that those decisions went to narrow the line of his proceedings on the impeachment. He confessed that he had charged Mr. Hastings with the destruction of a witness (Nuncomar) whose evidence was necessary to the present charge; but he declared that in stating this he had said no more than he really believed, and no more than he hoped to be able to prove. He declared that this conviction could only be torn from him with his life. Several reports had got abroad, as that Fox was decidedly averse to proceeding with the impeachment; that sundry disagreements had broken out among the managers; and that the greatest personages in the

* 135 against 66.

† The dispute in the House had occupied *four days*.

country were very desirous the trial should stop. A few days after, Mr. Marsham complained in the House of Commons of a paragraph in a newspaper, which said that "the trial of Mr. Hastings was to be put off to another session, unless the House of Lords had spirit enough to put an end to so shameful a business." A warm debate followed, in which great complaints were made of the scandalous licentiousness of the public press. A motion was made and unanimously carried for prosecuting the printer of the paper of which Mr. Marsham complained.

Meanwhile the trial went on languidly. The great hall was no longer crowded; the seemingly interminable accounts of Hastings's corruption wearied and thinned the audience day after day. Legal doubts and difficulties occurred rather frequently, or were ingeniously suggested by the counsel for the prisoner; and, on nearly every one of these occasions, the lords withdrew to their chamber of parliament to deliberate and consult by themselves. All these retreats and returns made Lord Stanhope say that the judges walked and the trial stood still. After one of these marches and counter-marches it was announced as the decision of their lordships, "that it was not competent for the managers to produce the examination of Nuncomar in evidence, the said managers not having proved or even stated anything as a ground for admitting such evidence." It seems difficult to conceive how the managers could have expected any other decision: the character of Nuncomar as a witness and maker of evidence had been fully ascertained; and the examination in question was what had been taken in the council at Calcutta by Clavering, Monson, and Francis, when they were more powerful than the governor, and when their hatred of him was at its greatest height. The managers, however, in their turn, now desired leave to withdraw, that they too might consult apart. Upon their return into court Burke declared that it was with equal surprise and concern the managers had heard the determination of their lordships, which would exceedingly increase the difficulty of convicting the criminal; but that to this, as to other hardships, they must submit. A day or two after, their lordships, under the guidance of the chancellor, resolved, after another walk to their own chamber, that certain evidence taken out of the minutes at Calcutta should not be admitted. Here Burke exclaimed that he gave joy to all Indian delinquents. "Plunder on," said he; "the laws intended to restrain you are mere scarecrows. Accumulate wealth by any means, however illegal, profligate, infamous. You are sure of impunity; for the natives of India are, by their religion, debarred from appearing against you out of their own country, and circumstantial evidence will not be received." Fox proposed reading some long consultations of the council at Calcutta as evidence. Upon this their lordships again repaired to their own chamber of parliament, and nothing more was done that day. On the morrow the managers were informed that the consultations could not now be read. Burke said that he felt consoled by the use of the word *now*, as it led him to hope that the evidence might be read at some other time. Before many more words had been spoken fresh doubts arose, and the managers begged leave to withdraw. When the managers returned and gave in their answer, the lords adjourned to submit a question about the reception of evidence to the twelve judges. The opinion of the judges was unfavourable to the managers, who had wished to produce evidence which had not been given upon oath. The managers now bitterly complained that the opinions and decisions of their lordships were delivered imperatively, without any accompanying reasons or explanations; and that they were thwarted by forms of law in their search after justice. Burke again declared that the criminal was improperly screened. He said the decision "held out to future governors of Bengal the most certain and unbounded impunity. Peculation in India would be no longer practised, as it used to be, with caution and with secrecy: it would in future stalk abroad in noon-day, and act without disguise; because, after such a decision as had been made by their lordships, there was no possibility of bringing

into a court the proofs of peculation." To prove the corruption of Hastings in his transactions with the Munny Begum, the managers desired that Philip Francis, Esq., should be called in. To this the Lords objected. There then followed warm disputes between the managers and the counsel for the defendant as to the production in evidence of some letters and papers said to have been written by the Munny Begum, and several days were spent in these discussions. The Lords then adjourned to their own chamber to consult and deliberate; and when the Court next met, it was announced that the said papers could not be read. Burke argued that they were ruining his case by naked technicalities; and he claimed to know the opinions upon which their lordships' decision was grounded. His temper had already been repeatedly tried by Law, the best or the boldest of Hastings's counsel; and now another violent altercation took place between them. This was scarcely over when other difficulties arose about the reception of evidence. Their lordships again withdrew to their own chamber to consult the judges, and the judges demanded a little time for consideration. The trial was thus interrupted for seven days; and when the Court met again, in consequence of some new doubts, their lordships adjourned for six days longer. In the interval they had a long debate in their own House, in which it was voted, by the usual majority, that all their proceedings had been strictly according to precedent. On their again meeting, the chancellor requested to know from the managers to what *length of time* it appeared to them their proceedings on this branch of the subject would extend. The managers replied that, even if no delay were got up by the lawyers, the proceedings must occupy several days. As the prorogation was at hand, this seemed to point to another session for the settling of this single charge. Hastings hereupon said that if the trial went on at this pace, his remaining life would not be long enough to see the end of it. He declared that if he had foreseen such an interminable process he would rather have pleaded Guilty at the beginning; and if he had done so he would certainly have been a gainer, at least on the side of the purse. He said he could not expect their lordships to spend many more days on the subject during this session; but, if any specific time could be mentioned in which this charge, which he had been informed was to be the last, would be finished, he would rather waive all defence than postpone the decision to another year. Their lordships adjourned to their chamber of parliament, and there decided that they would proceed on the trial on the first Tuesday in the next session of parliament. It is not surprising that the purse of Hastings and the patience of the public should by this time have been completely worn out, or that the whole subject should have been set aside as a specific for *ennui*.*

Upon the 16th of February, 1790, the trial recommenced in Westminster Hall. Upon this day—the *fifty-fifth* day of the sitting of the court—Mr. Anstruther went through the charge relating to the corrupt receipt of presents. Disputes instantly arose about the evidence proper to be admitted; and the Lords adjourned to their own chamber to consult. Then fresh objections were made by Hastings's counsel, that the managers were going into matter that was not set down or made a charge of in the articles of impeachment. Burke said that the Commons of England had a right to demand that they should *not be held to technical niceties;* and that, if the managers were to be debarred from giving evidence *not specifically stated in the charges*, it would be impossible for their lordships to determine the *amount of the fine* which ought to be imposed upon the prisoner, if he should be convicted. But their lordships, after another adjournment and consultation, sustained the objections made on the part of the defendant. The public were now beginning to complain that this business, which obstructed other business, would never be finished. On the 11th of May, Burke himself called the attention of the House of Commons to the protracted continuance of the trial. He would not admit that the managers were at all blamable for the slow progress

* Hastings's Trial, 6 vols. in folio—Mill. *Hist.* of Ind.—Ann. Regist.

made: he attributed the delay to Hastings himself, to the determination of the House of Lords, obtained upon Hastings's own petition, that all the articles of charge should be proceeded upon before the court came to any decision; and to Hastings's counsel, who had insisted all along upon reading papers at full length, instead of extracts from them. But what he considered the greatest cause of delay was the circumstance that the managers were not made acquainted with the grounds and extent of the principles on which the decisions of the House of Lords were framed respecting the admissibility of evidence. This, said Burke, rendered it impossible for the managers to know how far the next questions which they intended to put might, or might not, militate against those principles. He concluded by moving the following resolutions:—"1. That this House, taking into consideration the interruptions occasioned by the occupations of the judges and the House of Lords, as also the impediments which have occurred, or may occur, in the course of the trial of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq., doth, without meaning to abandon the truth or importance of the charges, authorize the managers of their said impeachment to insist only upon such and so many of the said charges as shall appear to them the most conducive to the obtaining speedy and effectual justice against the said Warren Hastings. 2. That the Commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled, from a regard to their own honour, and from the duty which they owe to all the commons of Great Britain, in whose name, as well as in their own, they act in the public prosecutions by them carried on before the House of Lords, are bound to persevere in their impeachment against Warren Hastings, Esq., late governor-general of Bengal, until judgment may be obtained upon the most important articles in the same." Pitt supported the first of these resolutions, but thought that the second ought to be dropped as unnecessary. Fox laid the blame of delay upon the obstructions raised by the Lords to the receipt of evidence; and he complained that every decision of their lordships was unaccompanied with reasons, and was confined to one particular case at a time, so that all other cases were left as uncertain as before. Hence great embarrassment to the managers, and continual adjournments of their lordships to their own chamber, where their deliberations were not public, but close. A day or two after these proceedings there appeared in a newspaper a letter, containing a review of the trial, and very severe strictures upon the managers, who were accused of being guilty of a great crime in instituting the prosecution at all, and of a still greater crime in not having closed it long ago. The letter was signed by Hastings's old champion Major Scott. On the 21st of May General Burgoyne rose in the House of Commons to lodge a complaint against this publication, which he called libellous, and a gross attack not only upon the conduct of the managers, but upon the honour and justice of the House—an attack made, too, by a member of that House. After the newspaper letter had been read by the clerk, the major was called upon for an answer. Scott avowed himself to be the author, at the same time protesting that no man living had a greater respect for the rules of the House than he had; and that, if he had broken any of them, he had done so unintentionally, and was sorry for it. But then the major entered into a general justification of the sense and wording of his letter, saying that, if he had been guilty of an error in publishing it, it was through the force of great examples, and citing a variety of publications by Burke, by Sheridan, and by General Burgoyne, his present accuser, all which he considered to be far stronger libels than any he had ever written. Having finished his defence, he then, according to the practice of the House, withdrew immediately. Burgoyne then moved, "That it is against the law and usage of parliament, and a high breach of privilege, to write and publish, or cause to be written and published, any scandalous or libellous reflections on the honour and justice of this House, in any of the impeachments or prosecutions in which it is engaged." This resolution being carried without a division, Burgoyne followed up his blow by moving, "That it appears

to this House that the letter now delivered in is a scandalous and libellous paper reflecting on the honour and justice of this House, and on the conduct of the managers appointed to conduct the impeachment now proceeding against Warren Hastings, Esq." Pitt rose, and, after admitting the offence, very fairly urged that the House had of late years exceedingly relaxed its practice in restraining the publication either of their proceedings or of censures bestowed on them: that the common practice formed a rule, to which every man had a right to look, and which he had a right to expect should not be violated in his particular case; that, under a law formed by custom, or fallen partially into disuse, no individual instance ought to be selected for punishment, unless it was more heinous than those which were commonly overlooked; and, upon these principles, Pitt thought that, if the present offence required punishment, it ought to be a very gentle one. He then moved to adjourn the debate to the 27th, which was carried, as a matter of course, by the large ministerial majority. On the 27th, when the debate was resumed, many severe reflections were made on the prevailing abuses of the freedom of the press. Burke declared that he was afraid neither of the liberty of the press nor of the licentiousness of the press; but that what he was really afraid of was its *notorious venality*. And then he alluded to the newspapers which had advocated the cause of Hastings, stating as positive fact that 20,000*l.* had been spent by the ex-governor-general among newspaper people. Burke called all the things which had been inserted *libels*, which they were not; but between the libels, and the foul attacks upon Burke himself, which were very numerous, and more moderate and legitimate matter, a good deal more than 20,000*l.* was expended by Hastings. Major Scott, who did not do his work for nothing, is said to have received 20,000*l.* himself.

After several alterations and amendments had been proposed, it was agreed that a resolution should be passed in this softened form: "That John Scott, Esq., having avowed himself to be the writer of the said letter, is guilty of a violation of his duty as a member of this House, and of reflecting upon the managers of the impeachment." Burgoyne, who was one of the managers, and who had no mercy, then moved, "That Major Scott be reprimanded *at the bar* of the House, for his conduct in publishing the said libel." Pitt instantly moved, by way of amendment, to leave out the words "at the bar of the House," and insert the words "in his place." Wyndham, also one of the managers, strongly opposed this proposition. Pitt replied to Wyndham in a warm and angry manner. Wyndham rejoined; and then Fox came to his support, making the debate very personal, and reproaching the minister for being *over-warm*—a fault which Fox was so very often guilty of himself, and which he did not eschew on the present occasion. He said that calling Major Scott the friend of Mr. Hastings was a prostitution of the name of friendship. With respect to the motion, he declared that if it had been "That Major Scott be committed," and they had been called upon to show a precedent of a case of equal enormity in which a member had *not* been committed, he believed it would have scarcely been possible for them to have found one. As to a member being reprimanded at the bar, there was a famous precedent in the year 1660, when Lenthall had been so reprimanded, and that too for words spoken in the House. How much more, then, ought Major Scott to be reprimanded for his deliberate, indecent, and atrocious libels, published in a common newspaper!—For his own part, he agreed with his honourable friend (Wyndham) that this offence merited expulsion! In the end it was decided by the ministerial majority that the major should be reprimanded in his place.

The impeachment went none the faster for these angry debates. The Court of Peers sat in Westminster Hall only thirteen days during the whole of this session, and did not get beyond the charge which Anstruther had opened. On the 7th and 9th of June, the sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth days of the trial, counting from its commencement in the Hall, Fox summed up and commented upon the evidence, in a speech which occupied the two whole days, and on the

evening of the 9th their lordships adjourned to their chamber, where they agreed to postpone the trial to the first Tuesday in the next session of parliament. On Thursday the 10th of June, the king put an end to the session of parliament by a speech from the throne, in which he informed the two Houses of his intention of immediately dissolving the present and calling a new parliament.

The languor which seemed to attend the trial was relieved at the opening of the sessions of 1790-1 by some very animated debates which involved exceedingly interesting questions of constitutional law. A question arose whether an impeachment by the House of Commons did not remain *in statu quo*, notwithstanding the intervention of a dissolution. Upon the solution of this question it depended whether the proceedings against Hastings could be taken up by the present parliament where they were left by the last, or whether they must recommence *de novo*. The idea of travelling over ground which had already occupied the parliamentary portions of four years was distressing and alarming; and it seems to have been generally understood that if the *da capo* principle were affirmed, the trial would be thrown up, or would stop where it was. The most learned or leading lawyers of the day differed in opinion, as became their calling, and their party rivalries and differences. Many, we believe the majority, of the managers would have been glad to be quit of a business which had long ceased to excite or interest the nation, and which was now buried and kept out of sight by the crowded events of the French revolution, which excited everybody: but Burke, who believed that he had a great and sacred mission to perform, resolved to persevere in spite of all discouragements; and, in order to bring the point in dispute to a regular decision, he moved, on the 17th of December, 1790, in a committee of the whole House, "That it appears, that an impeachment by this House, &c., against Warren Hastings, Esq., late governor-general of Bengal, for sundry high crimes and misdemeanors, is now depending." This, he said, would be but a plain assertion of the privileges of the House of Commons, as handed down to them by their predecessors, through an uninterrupted succession of five hundred years. In all the convulsions of our government, in all the struggles, contests, and incidental or progressive changes of the functions and powers of the House of Commons, this alone, he said, had remained immutable, that an impeachment was never to be defeated by collusion with a minister, or by the power of the crown. He argued that an impeachment abated by a dissolution of parliament was not to be found, in any plain or express terms, on the journals of the House of Lords, or the journals of the House of Commons, or in the minutes of the conferences between the two Houses; that it was as little to be found in any book of authority, or in any good report of law cases. The debate which followed lasted three days or nights. Erskine, the close friend of Fox, and one of the champions of the Whig or opposition party, immediately followed Burke, and endeavoured to prove, in a very elaborate speech, that Burke was wrong in his law, and that a dissolution *did* abate all proceedings of a depending impeachment. Pitt, on the contrary, supported Burke and his resolution, declaring it to be his opinion that the precedents which had been collected in favour of impeachments abating upon a dissolution were so few in number, and of such questionable authority, as clearly to show the weakness of that argument. In the course of a very able and argumentative speech, Pitt insisted that impeachments ought to continue, and did actually continue *in statu quo* from parliament to parliament; and that the non-abatement of impeachments by a dissolution was a doctrine recognised and well established by many precedents in our early history, and by some precedents since the revolution of 1688. After reviewing these precedents, Pitt took into consideration the primary principles of the constitution; remarking that the present doubts had chiefly arisen from confounding the two different powers of parliament, the legislative and the judicial, each of which has its separate and distinct limits of duration. The legislative power, or every depending act of legislation, was

not only terminated by a dissolution, but was also abated by a prorogation of parliament: but their judicial power and acts were not influenced either by prorogation or by dissolution; and therefore impeachment, being a judicial proceeding, could not be affected by either. If in the cases of writs of error and of petitions of appeal the process continued from session to session, and from parliament to parliament, still more necessary was it that the proceedings in an impeachment should also continue: for, in the former cases, there was generally only one individual against another, upon a question of a private nature; whereas in the latter, the House of Commons, and all the commons of Great Britain, were parties against a state delinquent. He contended that the impeachment of Warren Hastings was not merely the act of the late parliament, but of the whole body of the commons of the realm, the proceedings being in the name both of constituents and of representatives. He concluded his long and much admired speech by declaring that he should cheerfully vote for the original resolution as moved by Burke. Sir John Scott, the solicitor-general, Hardinge, Mitford, and several others of the lawyers, supported Erskine, and argued against Burke and the prime minister. On the third day of the debate, after the solicitor-general had delivered his sentiments, Fox rose to declare that he entirely coincided with Pitt and Burke. Upon a division on the third night of the debate, Erskine's amendment, that the chairman should report progress, in other words, that the committee should break up without coming to any decision, was rejected by 143 against 30, and Burke's original motion was then agreed to.

In consequence of this decision, which confirmed and fully established a most important precedent, the Commons informed the Lords, on the 14th of February, that they were ready to go on with the impeachment of Mr. Hastings. Their lordships, before sending an answer to the Commons, appointed a committee of their own to examine precedents, in order to decide whether the dissolution of parliament had or had not put an end to the impeachment. The report of this committee was not ready till the 19th of April, and was not taken into consideration until the 16th of May. On the latter day Lord Porchester moved that a message should be sent to the Commons to intimate that their lordships would proceed upon the trial of Warren Hastings on the Monday following. Lord Radnor moved an amendment for referring the question to the judges, in the intention of proving that the obligation of the bond of recognizance entered into by the sureties of Hastings did not extend beyond the last parliament, and that therefore the trial was terminated by the dissolution. A long debate ensued, the Lords going over the same ground as the Commons had already done. Lord Radnor's amendment was, however, rejected by 70 against 20; and Lord Porchester's motion was carried by 66 against 18. Lord Chancellor Thurlow, and Lord Kenyon, chief justice of the King's Bench, were in the minority, having contended for the abatement. On the other hand, Loughborough, chief justice of the Common Pleas, and so soon to be lord chancellor, spoke and voted against the abatement and against any delay, and was authorized by the great Lord Mansfield (who was too old and infirm to attend the House), and by Lord Camden (who was obliged by indisposition to quit it), to express their sentiments, and to make use of their proxies.

In the mean time Burke, being well aware of the many complaints about the slow progress of the trial, had moved, on the 14th of February, "That, in consideration of the length of time which has already elapsed since carrying up the impeachment against Warren Hastings, Esq., it appears to this House to be proper, for the purpose of obtaining substantial justice with as little delay as possible, to proceed to no other parts of the said impeachment than those on which the managers of the prosecution have already closed their evidence; excepting only such parts of the impeachment as relate to the contracts, pensions, and allowances." Mr. Ryder moved, as an amendment, that the latter part of the motion, relating to the exceptions, should be omitted. This being rejected, Mr. Jekyll proposed a bolder

amendment—"That, in consideration of the length of time which has already elapsed, &c., the House of Commons do resolve to proceed no further in this business." This also being negatived, Hastings's constant friend, Mr. Sumner, moved the question of adjournment, but was outvoted by 194 against 26. In the course of this debate Pitt supported the arguments which were used by Burke, to show the necessity of going into the charge about contracts, &c., to prove that the long duration of the trial was no fault of the managers, and that it was reasoning upon a false principle to estimate the time which the remaining charges would occupy by the length of time which had been occupied by the former charges. He said it by no means followed, that, because three charges had taken up three years, a fourth charge would take up a proportionate length of time. Every one would acknowledge that three years formed a long period for an innocent man to remain under the suspense and anxiety of accusation, *for which some indemnification would be indisputably due;* (none was ever given;) and even to a guilty person such a protracted trial must, in any ordinary case, be considered as constituting no small portion of punishment. But, then, should the charges preferred against Mr. Hastings, or even a principal part of them, be proved, what man would assert that the punishment he had already suffered was adequate to the magnitude of his crimes?

The Lords again assembled as a court in Westminster Hall, which was no longer crowded by rank and fashion, or by any other class, for all had grown weary of the business, and were ready to yawn at the mere mention of it. On the 23rd of May the charge respecting contracts, pensions, allowances, frauds, and extortions, was opened by Mr. St. John. Three days were employed in the production of evidence. On the 27th, when the court broke up, Mr. Loveden moved in the House of Commons an address, praying "That his majesty would be graciously pleased to continue the session of parliament until the evidence on the part of the prosecution has been closed, Mr. Hastings's defence heard, and judgment finally given." This motion was strenuously opposed by Dundas, who denounced it as an invasion of the prerogative of the crown to continue or prorogue the sittings as it chose. He hoped that the House, which had just vindicated in so excellent a manner its own constitutional privilege, by the resolution on the non-abatement of impeachment, would not, almost at the same moment, encroach so far on the rights of another branch of the legislature, as to desire the crown to commit its prerogative of prorogation to the discretion of three distinct parties, or—to the managers, who might extend the prosecution; to the prisoner, who might prolong his defence; and to the judges, who might protract their judgment. Fox denied that Loveden's motion was any encroachment on the prerogative of the crown, as the right of advising the crown in this matter had been repeatedly exercised by the House. He was, however, of opinion that the motion went rather too far in fixing the period for the sitting of parliament till judgment should be pronounced; and he proposed as an amendment—"To pray his majesty not to prorogue parliament before such further progress should be made as should afford reasonable grounds of expectation that the trial might be brought to a conclusion early in next session." Fox's amendment was rejected by 144 against 61; and Loveden's original motion was then negatived without a division. A similar motion, made in the House of Peers by Lord King, met with the same fate. As nineteen of the twenty-three charges had been rejected altogether—if they had all been retained the trial must have lasted till Hastings was entombed in Daylesford church—the managers closed their case on the 30th of May. Although he could not now expect to bring his defence before the court during the present session, Hastings begged to be allowed one day for stating what he deemed of importance respecting the further progress of the trial. This request was granted without any demur from the court or from the managers; and on the 2nd of June he delivered a long and able discourse, the effect of which, however, must have been somewhat spoiled by his reading it from

a manuscript which he held in his hand. When he had read for about two hours, he requested the indulgence of a few minutes' rest. As soon as he had recovered from his fatigue, he proceeded, and in about another hour and a half he concluded the discourse, which is said to have excited various and deep emotions in the breasts of all classes of his hearers. In it Hastings declared that he was ready and desirous to waive his defence to the charges preferred against him by the Commons, and refer himself to their lordships' immediate judgment, if they should be pleased to proceed to immediate judgment; that for his acquittal he trusted confidently to the evidence produced by his prosecutors themselves to make good their charges; being satisfied that not one criminal allegation of the charges had been made good against him, and that, on the contrary, almost every one of them had been refuted by the evidence brought in support of it. Their lordships, he hoped, would try his conduct by the evidence, oral or written, which his accusers had brought before the court, and not by their brilliant speeches. He gently complained of the effects of such oratory on the public mind. It was, he said, the custom of this country—and a custom having an admirable motive and end—that the court before which trials are heard should be open and free of access to the whole world. "But, my lords," said he, "this custom puts my fame and honour at issue with other judgments than your lordships; and those judgments are formed not, like yours, on calm investigation and a cool consideration of evidence. My lords, the audience come with other minds and with different motives. They come to hear the declamations of invective, and to be amused by the ingenuity of the orators. Bold assertions, however unfounded and unjust, are believed by them, because they are boldly made, and heard without refutation. Misled by the arts of eloquence, they are deceived into opinions of which it is impossible they can either detect the fallacy or perceive the imposition. They are pleased and deluded by the talents of the orator; and whatever prejudices he wishes to create in their minds they of necessity receive; and, after the entertainment of the day, they depart with their passions inflamed, to communicate their effects to the circle of their acquaintance. Is it possible that the general effect of such declamations can fail to embitter my life and affect my peace in society as long as the trial lasts, by producing all the ill consequences, on the public opinion, of guilt and condemnation?" He again earnestly prayed for an immediate decision, and to all the charges gave answers brief, spirited, clear, and carrying the appearance of candour, truth, and a consciousness not only of innocence, but of having deserved well of his country.* The war which had again broken out, and was now raging in India, the ambition, power, and resources of Tippoo Sultaun, made ministers and public men more sensible than they might otherwise have been to the value of our Eastern possessions, and to the difficulties of all kinds which Hastings must have experienced in preserving them in a season of almost universal failure, embarrassment, and humiliation. He skilfully alluded to these present difficulties. "My lords," said he, "you are now better enabled to judge of the difficulties which I had to encounter in the last war, than I did suppose it possible for your lordships to be when this trial commenced. Your lordships will now feel for the wants under which I laboured when I had to contend with all the powers of India, combined with the French and Dutch, because your lordships have proofs before you, in the council chamber of parliament, that the resources of India are now utterly inadequate to the support of a war against one native power who is unassisted by any European ally! We are now in alliance with all the Mahratta chiefs, and with the Subahdar of the Deccan, who were in the former war confederated against us. The government of Bengal, when this war commenced, was free from foreign and domestic embarrassments. The nabob vizier had completely liquidated his debt, and his subsidy was paid with the utmost punctuality. Benares afforded the full

* Ann. Regist.—Hastings's Trial.

revenue, *which I am impeached for having procured.* The salt, the opium, and the land revenues of Bengal, added to the subsidy from Oude and the Benares collections, produced annually nearly 5,400,000*l.* But, my lords, so inadequate have these resources proved, with the addition of the revenues of Fort St. George and Bombay, that since the commencement of the present war a very considerable sum in specie has been transmitted from England to India; money has been borrowed to the utmost extent of their credit in Bengal, and Hyder Beg Khan, whom your lordships have heard of so often, has assisted Lord Cornwallis with a loan of twenty-two lacs of rupees. I mention these circumstances to your lordships to prove that the resources of India cannot, in time of war, meet the expenses of India. Your lordships know that I could not, and Lord Cornwallis cannot, do *what every minister of England has done since the Revolution.* I could not borrow to the utmost extent of my wants, *and tax posterity to pay the interest of my loans.* . . . . Allow me, my lords, to call again to your recollection the many and the unprecedented difficulties with which I had to contend. Every measure of my administration was calculated to relieve the public exigencies; nor can any man in England point out other means than those which I employed, by which the public necessities could have been relieved; yet I have been for four years impeached for the several acts by which I preserved what the Indian minister (Dundas) has called, in the House of Commons, the brightest jewel in the British crown!" He said that for this discourse he had, in effect, undertaken to reduce the mass of seven folio volumes into the compass of a few pages—a tremendous labour. After observing that such an address must necessarily be very deficient, he proceeded to reason upon his own fair reputation for so many years, and upon the truth of the old adage, that no man ever became most wicked all of a sudden. "If," said he, "the tenor of a man's life has been invariably marked with a disposition to guilt, it will be a strong presumption against him, in any alleged instance, that he was guilty. If, on the contrary, the whole tenor of a man's life has been such as to have obtained for him the universal good-will of all with whom he has had any intercourse in the interested concerns of life, the presumption will be as well grounded, that he was innocent of any particular wrong imputed to him, especially if those who are the alleged sufferers by that wrong make no complaint against him. But what shall be said of complaints brought against a man who was in *trust* for the interests of the greatest commercial body in the world; who employed and directed the services of thousands of his fellow-citizens in great official departments and in extensive military operations; who connected princes and states by alliances with his parent kingdom, and on whose rule the peace and happiness of many millions of men depended; I say, what shall be said of complaints being brought *against* such a man in the names and on the behalf of all those descriptions of men who have all united their suffrages in his favour? Such complaints, with such a presumption against the possibility of their truth, may have existed, but the history of mankind cannot produce an instance of their being received on such a foundation, until the late and present House of Commons thought fit to create one in my impeachment." He ran over the events of his public life, which had commenced in early youth, and had lasted thirty-five long years. He happily and properly explained that his education in business had been essentially an Indian one, and had been acquired under and from the Company. "With the year 1750," said he, "I entered the service of the East India Company; and from that service I have derived all my official habits, all the knowledge which I possess, all the principles which were to regulate my conduct in it. If those principles were wrong, or if in the observance of them I have erred, great allowances ought to be made for human infirmity, where I possessed such inadequate means of obtaining any better guidance." He declared that he had always reported to the court of directors, his immediate masters, every measure

which he had undertaken in India, minutely explaining its motives and its objects; and for the truth of this assertion he appealed to the directors, and to the innumerable volumes of consultations and letters in their possession, and in his hand-writing. Nor was it to the directors only that he had been thus communicative. He had given the then prime minister of England constant information of all that he was doing or intending to do; and his letters to Lord North might show in a striking manner how careful he was to expose all his actions to the knowledge of ministers, and consequently how little apprehension he could have felt that he was doing anything that could be deemed reprehensible. If he was guilty of error or of crime, how could the court of directors themselves, whom nobody thought of accusing, be innocent? "In all instances," said he, "which might have been deemed of a doubtful nature, my communications to them were virtual references for their sanction or for their future prohibition. If I received neither, their silence was a confirmation, and had more than the effect of an order, since, with their tacit approbation of them, I had imposed upon myself the prior obligation of my own conception of their propriety. Were I, therefore, for a moment to suppose that the acts with which I am charged, and which I so communicated (for I communicated all to the court of directors), were intrinsically wrong, yet from such proofs it is evident that I thought them right; and therefore the worst that could be said of them, as they affected me, is, that they were errors of judgment; and even for these, in all instances where they were repeated or the causes of subsequent acts deriving the same quality from them, the error and every blame which could attach to them was theirs who might have corrected them, and did not." With no empty or vain-glorious boast he affirmed that he had himself invented the system and made the machinery which governed India. "Every division of official business," said he, "and every department of government which now exists in Bengal, with only such exceptions as have been occasioned by the changes of authority enacted from home, are of my formation. The establishment formed for the administration of the revenue; the institution of the courts of civil and criminal justice in the province of Bengal and its dependencies; the form of government established for the province of Benares, with all its dependent branches of revenue, commerce, judicature, and military defence; the arrangements created for the subsidy and defence of the province of Oude; every other political connection and alliance, were created by me, and subsist unchanged, or, if changed, changed only (to use the words of my noble and virtuous successor, applied to the principles of my arrangements in the province of Oude) 'with a view to strengthen their principles, and render them permanent.' . . . . . To sum up all," said he, "I maintained the provinces of my immediate administration in a state of peace, plenty, and security, when every other member of the British empire was involved in external wars or civil tumults. . . . . I raised the collective annual income of the Company's possessions under my administration from three to five millions sterling, not of temporary and forced exaction, but of an easy, continued, and still existing production: the surest evidence of a good government, improving agriculture, and increasing population. To the Commons of England, in whose name I am arraigned for desolating the provinces of our dominion in India, I dare to reply, that they are, and their representatives in parliament annually persist in telling them so, the most flourishing of all the states of India. It was I who made them so. The valour of others acquired, I enlarged, and gave shape and consistency to, the dominion which you hold there; I preserved it; I sent forth its armies with an effectual but economical hand through unknown and hostile regions, to the support of your other Indian possessions—to the retrieval of one of them from degradation and dishonour, and of the other from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were of your formation, or that of others, not of mine. When you cried out for peace, and your cries

were heard by those who were the object of them, I resisted this and every other species of counteraction by rising in my demands; and I accomplished a peace, a lasting and, I hope, an everlasting one, with one great state. I gave you all; and you have rewarded me with confiscation, disgrace, and a life of impeachment! I am, above all things, desirous that your lordships should come to an immediate decision upon the evidence before you. But if the shortness of time should prevent you from complying with this my earnest desire, and the trial must of necessity, and to my unspeakable sorrow, be prolonged to another session, then, my lords, I trust you will not consider me, by anything I have said, as precluded from adopting such means of defence as my counsel may judge most advisable for my interest."*

The Lords then retired in their accustomed order to their own House, and there resolved to proceed with the trial on the first Tuesday in the next session of parliament.

The war with Tippoo Sultaun continued to illustrate the extraordinary ability and vigour with which Hastings had conducted the last and incomparably more difficult war, and was the means of calling forth in his favour the testimony of many men who had the best opportunities of forming correct opinions and estimates. Every ship that arrived from Madras or Bengal was full of Hastings's admirers. Every gentleman from India, whether in a civil or a military capacity, whether in the service of the Company or in the king's service, applauded the late governor-general wherever he went; and by these and other means a wonderful change was effected in public opinion. Even the sufferings of the Begums of Oude and of the two old unmanned men were forgotten; and people preferred thinking of the sufferings and the wrongs of one who had rendered such brilliant services to his country, and had got so little by them: for, by this time, the Aladdin-lamp stories of Hastings's treasures were all exploded, it being very generally known, and proved beyond the reach of a doubt, that the late ruler of a vast empire had brought home no great wealth, and that what he had brought was nearly all consumed by the enormous expenses attending this never-ending trial. The public press too rendered Hastings very material service, for the number of his eulogizers now far exceeded that of his vilifiers. Continually, letters, remarks, statements of facts, appeared in the newspapers, written by persons who had been in the East, and who had learned on the spot the high estimation in which he was held by natives of all castes and conditions, as well as by the English settlers or employés in the country. Various journalists and pamphleteers, including the loose but clever Logan, seem to have been regularly retained for the late governor-general by Major Scott, who thus made the money fly very fast among a hungry herd. Burke probably did not much overstate the sum when he declared, as early as 1790, when the campaign, in a manner, had but begun, that 20,000*l.* had been employed in winning over the press. But, besides these writers of "leaders" in newspapers and these hired pamphleteers, there were other men who did the work for love. Chamberlain John Wilkes, who was now in affluence, and who was very capable of doing friendly actions for nothing when he was not in want of money, took up the pen and wrote at least one pamphlet in defence of Hastings, who calls the production "a most elegant as well as sensible composition."*

On the 14th of February of the following year (1792), which was the seventy-fifth day of actual trial, the court was again assembled in Westminster Hall; and Mr. Law (afterwards Lord Ellenborough), the leading counsel for Hastings, opened the defence in form. His speech occupied three whole days. After Law had finished, Plumer, another counsel for the defendant, began; and this learned gentleman, as if ambitious to surpass his senior, spoke for five mortal days, without ever getting beyond the first article of the

* Ann. Regist.—Accounts of Trial, &c.

* Letter from Hastings to Mr. Thomson, in Gleig's Life.

impeachment, or the Benares charge. It was not till the 1st of May that the evidence for the defence began to be adduced. The printed evidence presented was about double the bulk of the managers' evidence—a mass of folio print enough to alarm the most laborious lawyer. The managers made as many objections to this evidence as Mr. Law had made to theirs; and days passed in wearisome wrangling and jangling about what was admissible and what otherwise. When this was over, Dallas, another of the defendant's counsel, summed up the evidence on the Benares business, and occupied three days in so doing. As soon as he had finished the Lords adjourned to the Chamber of Parliament, and agreed to proceed with the trial next session. Their lordships, however, did not keep to the day they had appointed, for, though parliament reassembled on the 13th of December, 1792, they did not resume the trial till the 15th of February, 1793. On this, the ninety-sixth day of the trial, Law opened the defence on the Begums of Oude charge in a speech which lasted two days. Then followed evidence, with disputes about its reception; another speech from the long-winded Dallas, which lasted four days; and another from Plumer, which lasted three days. Hastings then read another short address to their lordships, complaining of the slowness of the proceedings, and describing his state of suspense as almost insupportable. He said he was resolved to abridge the matter of his defence on the other articles, and hoped that the managers might conclude their reply to it before another prorogation. He averred again that his eminent services to his country had been rewarded with injustice and ingratitude. For this he was sharply reprehended by Burke, who said it was for the Lords to consider the propriety of such a speech, applied by a culprit at their bar to the Commons of Great Britain. Evidence was then produced on the remaining charges, and a mass of testimonials, commendatory letters, and addresses to Hastings from India were heaped upon the groaning table. The proofs as to the comparatively small amount of property Hastings had ever possessed were clear and satisfactory, and fully established the fact that few men had ever been more indifferent to money. When this evidence was closed, instead of leaving it to be summed up by his counsel, who in all probability would have occupied eight or ten days, Hastings himself addressed the court with brevity and great force. As he had not to go into the dark transactions at Fyzabad—as he had nothing to say about the Begums and the two old men, or even about the transactions at Benares, his task was comparatively easy, and his words may all be taken as solemn truths. He once more protested before God that all his most startling actions had been done solely for the good of his employers and the good of his country, and that he had in no one instance sacrificed his public trust to his private interest. He solemnly asseverated that Mr. Woodman, his attorney, had received all the remittances he had ever made to Europe; and that at no time had his whole property exceeded 100,000*l.** He allowed that he had raised money and obtained supplies in an irregular manner; but, though he was accused of these irregularities as if they had been committed needlessly or for his own personal advantage, they had in fact only been resorted to in cases of extreme state necessity, and for the benefit of the Company and the British nation. In concluding he charged the managers of the impeachment with a foul design to prolong the trial till another year; and he implored their lordships to resist this machination. The defence was terminated on the 28th of May, 1793. On the return of the Lords to their own House they agreed to adjourn further proceedings for a fortnight, and no longer. Upon this resolution being communicated to the Commons, Burke complained that, considering the mass of evidence to be digested, the time allowed was not sufficient for the managers to prepare their reply Burke next proceeded to censure, with great asperity,

* It appeared that 238,757*l.* had been remitted through the Company in the name of Mr. Hastings. But Mr. Woodman, his attorney, swore that the greater part of this was remitted for other persons; and that the sum remaining in his hands, as the property of Mr. Hastings, at the time of his return to England from India, was 72,963*l.*

the appeals which Hastings had made to the House of Lords, and the language he had used respecting the House of Commons. He declared that odium had been thrown upon the House of Commons—that affronts had been heaped upon the managers, the servants of that House—that the managers had been grossly calumniated. He also alluded to an incident which had taken place a few days before in Westminster Hall, while he (Burke) was cross-examining Mr. Auriol, one of Hastings's witnesses. Dr. Markham, Archbishop of York, whose son had held a high employment in India under the late governor-general, with some unbecoming violence of language and gesture told Burke that he examined the witness as if he were examining, not a gentleman, but a pickpocket; and that the illiberality and the inhumanity of the managers, in the course of this long trial, could not have been exceeded by Marat and Robespierre, had the conduct of the trial been committed to them. To this prelatical outbreak Burke, with great dignity and presence of mind, had replied in the Hall:—"I have not heard one word of what has been spoken, and I shall act as if I had not." But from his place in the House of Commons he displayed his resentment, giving the archbishop good cause to repent the hasty words he had spoken. He moved for a committee of the whole House to investigate with all possible publicity the conduct of the managers, undertaking to prove before it that the managers had neither protracted the trial by unnecessary delay, nor shortened it to the frustration of justice. Pitt preferred a select committee to inquire and report, as being more expeditious than a committee of the whole House; and this proposition was unanimously adopted. On the next day, May 29th, the Lords, being informed by a message from the Commons that more time was necessary to the managers to prepare their reply, immediately agreed to grant a few days more. On the 30th the report from the select committee was brought up, and a motion was made, and carried by a majority of more than two to one, that a further day should be desired to make the reply in the Hall. As soon as this was carried Burke moved, "That the managers be required to prepare and lay before the House the state of the proceedings in the trial of Warren Hastings, Esq.: to relate the circumstances attending it, and to give their opinion and make observations on the same, in explanation of those circumstances." This motion was violently opposed and was negatived by a majority of four votes. On Wednesday the 5th of June (1793), Mr. Grey said in the House, that it would be impossible for the managers to be ready by Monday next, the day fixed by their lordships, to reply to a mass of evidence which was not yet all printed; that, considering the late period of the session, it would be impossible to get through the remaining business of the trial without compromising the claims of justice; and that, therefore, he should be ready in his place the next day to move that a message be sent to the Lords to adjourn further proceedings in the trial till the next session of parliament, when the Commons would be ready to proceed, day by day, till final judgment should be given, if their lordships thought fit. Dundas gave Mr. Grey his real or apparent support; but the motion was negatived by 66 to 61. Two days after this, on Friday the 7th of June, Mr. Grey said that he wished the House would accept of his resignation as a manager; that he had to reply to the defence of Mr. Hastings on the first article of the impeachment; that it was impossible for him to be ready on Monday; and that, in his distress, he must apply to the House for advice and instruction. Dundas suggested that the best thing to do was for the House to apply once more to their lordships for a little delay. A motion to this effect was put, and was carried by 82 to 46. On the 10th of June, the great appointed Monday, a petition to the Lords was presented from Hastings, remonstrating strongly against this application for delay. Lord Stanhope, a zealous defendant of the late governor-general, moved to give notice to the Commons that the Lords would grant no more than two days, and would proceed on the trial on Wednesday next. Lord Abingdon severely condemned this proposition, and said it would bring a

national censure on their lordships' House to refuse the application of the Commons. "Do you mean," said his lordship, "by a side-wind, or by some other manœuvre, to get rid of this trial?" Lord Grenville then rose and proposed as an amendment, that, instead of Wednesday next, the second Tuesday in the next session of parliament should be fixed for hearing the reply of the managers and continuing the trial; and this, after some debate, was carried by 48 against 21. On the 13th of February, 1794, being the one hundred and eighteenth day, their lordships resumed their seats in Westminster Hall. Hastings's counsel immediately desired that their client might have the advantage of the high evidence of Lord Cornwallis, who had just arrived from India. The managers having assented to this request, not as a right, but as an indulgence, their lordships adjourned the trial for a week to allow Lord Cornwallis time. When the week had expired, Cornwallis was very ill, and therefore their lordships adjourned for five days longer; at the end of which time Hastings's counsel announced that, in consequence of the continued indisposition of Lord Cornwallis, and of their client's desire for dispatch, they would waive the benefit of his lordship's evidence. The managers then brought forward evidence to rebut the defence on the Benares charge. They proposed that Mr. Philip Francis should be admitted as a witness on this point. This gave rise to a hot dispute, which lasted for the greater part of two days. At the end of it their lordships determined that Francis should *not* be admitted; and when we reflect upon the animus, the malice, the whole character of that man, we cannot feel surprised at their lordships' determination. To destroy the value of a vote of thanks which Hastings had received from the court of directors, on his return to England in 1785, the managers offered to produce a paper containing sundry censures, printed by order of the directors in 1783. This was, indeed, preposterous, as the document of 1785 did away with the censures or criticisms hazarded in 1783, when Hastings, yet in India, had had time neither to explain all the motives of his conduct to the court of directors, nor to complete the great schemes he had in hand. After his counsel had spoken, Hastings himself rose and observed that the earlier of the two papers was an ill-considered and intemperate act of a court of directors who were his political enemies. "*It* was," he said, "a species of unparalleled cruelty to bring it forward to oppress a man who had already suffered so much, for no other reason, which he could divine, than having at a time of great public danger effectually served his country and saved India. He relied upon their lordships' humanity, honour, and justice, that they would not suffer this minute of the censure to be read, it having passed at a moment of intemperate heat and agitation, and having been utterly extinguished by a subsequent resolution." Burke rose as soon as Hastings had finished, and contended that it was proper to read the paper, because it was an answer to a letter which the prisoner had dared to write to the directors, his masters, and to print and publish at Calcutta. Here Hastings rose again, and said, with great warmth, "My Lords, I affirm that the assertion which your lordships have just heard from the manager *is false*. I never did print or publish any letter at Calcutta that I wrote to the court of directors. I knew my duty better. That assertion is a libel: it is of a piece with everything that I have heard uttered since the commencement of this trial by that *authorised, licensed*—(he paused for some time, and then added, turning to Burke) *manager!*" Burke reaffirmed that Hastings *had* printed and published the letter in Calcutta. Hastings loudly called out to him—"It is not true;" and the counsel said to Burke, "No! No!" The Lords adjourned to consult the judges, and, in conformity with the opinion of the judges, they, on the following day, announced to the managers that the paper could not be given in evidence. On the 1st of March their lordships announced that they were averse to proceed in this important business, which so constantly gave rise to questions in law, without the assistance of the judges; and that, therefore, on account of their absence on the circuit, they must

adjourn the court to the 7th of April. On the 6th of March Burke succeeded, in the House of Commons, in getting the managers themselves appointed a committee to inspect the journals of the Lords, and to examine into the mode of procedure adopted on the trial; and on the 17th of the same month, it was ordered, on Burke's motion, that the managers should lay before the House the circumstances which had retarded the progress of the said trial, &c. When their lordships re-assembled in Westminster Hall, Lord Cornwallis, having recovered from his illness, was examined on behalf of Hastings, and spoke highly of the merits of his administration and management of affairs in times of unprecedented difficulties. Cornwallis, indeed, seemed to admit—what no man in his senses ever doubted—that Hastings had at times gone beyond the strict limit of law or right, as every statesman in his circumstances must have done. To the most serious charges, and the least defensible—such as the treatment of the Begums and the two old eunuchs—Cornwallis could not speak, having no direct or personal knowledge of the matter; but in what might bear a reference to the case of the Rajah of Benares, his lordship said that he did not know that the government of Bengal had any right to call upon the tributary *princes*, in time of war, for any aids or sums of money over and above what they had agreed to pay; and that, for his own part, he had never demanded any such extra aids. But, if Lord Cornwallis had been in the same straits as Warren Hastings, would he not have demanded extra aids, and resorted to extraordinary measures, rather than have witnessed the ruin of the British empire in India? After the examination of his lordship, some days were passed in examining a Mr. Larkins, who had recently returned from India, and in disputing about the admissibility of some of his evidence. The testimony of this gentleman, whose examination was insisted upon, not by Hastings, but by the managers, went to prove the defendant's extreme disinterestedness in money matters. On the first day of his examination Hastings again implored the court to expedite the business. He had heard, he said, a report that parliament would soon be prorogued; and therefore he conjured them to come to an end before the session came to an end, for "human patience (meaning no disrespect to the Lords) could not sustain this eternal trial." And on the next day, while the managers and his counsel were wrangling, he repeated his prayer that their lordships would continue to sit and finish the trial in the present session. After numerous disputes and interruptions, during which Burke more than once lost all control over his temper, and said things quite as violent and indiscreet as the outbreak of the Archbishop of York, the evidence was all closed on the 6th of May, the hundred and twenty-ninth day of the trial. Then the managers began to sum up the evidence in reply: Mr. Grey, on the Benares charge; Sheridan, on the Begum charge; Fox, on the charge about presents; and Taylor, on that about contracts, loans, &c. When these gentlemen had occupied seven days with their speeches, Burke commenced on the 28th of May his concluding speech, which occupied the court nine more days. While Burke was in the midst of it, or when he had spoken for three days, Hastings again addressed a petition to the House of Lords for dispatch, and to entreat their lordships "to become suitors to his majesty's goodness on his behalf, that the present session of parliament might be permitted to continue till the reply on the part of the honourable managers for the House of Commons be fully and finally closed." In consequence of this application Burke broke the thread of his long oration to complain both of the House of Lords and of the prisoner; of the latter for writing an audacious libel under the name of a petition; and of the Lords for having recorded it in their journals. He then resumed his speech, which was concluded on the 16th of June. The business now hurried to its end. On the 20th of June, Pitt moved, in the House of Commons, a vote of thanks to the managers for their faithful management in the discharge of the trust reposed in them. The motion was seconded by the "India minister" Dundas, who, as well as his friend and

he Chancellor of the Ex-
clared that the managers were
the gratitude of parliament
country; and that if vexatious
had occurred, it was no fault of

6. Mr. Sumner, after expressing his regret at being obliged to vote against the minister, and his enthusiastic admiration of the character and abilities of Hastings, said he should have little objection to the vote of thanks if only Burke were excluded from it. Mr. Wigley and several others agreed with Sumner, and would vote for the motion if Burke were excepted, and the thanks given to all the rest of the managers. Long before this the rupture between Burke and Fox had severed the Whig party, and Burke was now sitting on the ministerial benches; but Fox was not therefore disposed to indulge in the paltry malice of supporting Sumner's proposition at the expense of his old friend and teacher, who had taken the lead in the impeachment, and without whom, in all probability, no impeachment whatever would have been begun. Fox and his friends disclaimed the invidious distinction which was attempted to be made between them and their distinguished leader; and they called it a miserable affectation to pretend to feel disgust at the strong language which Burke had occasionally used, but which, they said, was only the natural language of a strong indignation at vices and crimes of which all the managers believed the party impeached to have been guilty. Pitt's motion for the vote of thanks to all the managers was carried by 50 against 21. The prorogation of parliament took place a few days after, so that no further proceedings could be had until the next session.

On the 13th of January, 1795, their lordships returned to the business, and appointed a committee to inspect their journals for precedents of the mode of giving judgment on trials of high crimes and misdemeanors. The report of this committee was referred to a committee of the whole House, whose deliberations thereupon were prolonged from the 2nd to the 31st of March. Thurlow, who had descended from the woolsack to make way for his much-hated rival Loughborough, continued to take the side most favourable to Hastings; while Loughborough, as a matter of course, ranged on the opposite extreme. Thurlow maintained that, from the evidence produced by the managers, no criminal act whatsoever was proved; Loughborough, with an equal show of logic and law, insisted that the managers and their evidence proved nearly all the allegations. Although the Lords, at the beginning of the trial, had insisted that the evidence should be given in a lump, they now determined to judge of the articles one by one, and even to break some of them into several parts, and to decide upon them separately. The mode of procedure they adopted was to decide upon each part or point three several times; first, in a committee of the whole House: next, in the House itself; and the third time, as judges in Westminster Hall. The report of the committee was altogether favourable to Hastings. On the 17th of April the House determined the form of the questions which were to be put to the Lords in Westminister Hall; and on the 23rd of the same month they proceeded to judgment. On this last day of the trial public curiosity, which had so long slept, seemed to be revived, and the ancient Hall was almost as much crowded as on the first day. Nearly the length of one of the seven ages, which the greatest of all poets has allotted to man, had elapsed since that first day of wonder and excitement, and more than usually great had been the changes which had taken place in the long interval. Of one hundred and sixty noble lords that had walked in the procession on the first day, sixty were now in their graves. The close friendship in which the chief managers were then linked was now more dead than death; the ties of party had been snapt asunder; everything seemed changed. The young and light-hearted, who had come to the first day's pageant as to a festival, were now middle-aged and care-worn; and the men that were robust and comely at the commencement of the trial, were now—and none more so than Burke—withered and shrunk. Hastings might well say the arraignment had taken place before one generation, and the judgment was pronounced before another!

Only twenty-nine Peers attended in the Hall to vote. The question on the first article was put by Loughborough, as Lord High Steward for the trial; and it was first put to the youngest of the peers:—"Is Warren Hastings, Esquire, Guilty or Not Guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, charged by the Commons in the first article of charge?—George Lord Douglas (Earl of Morton in Scotland), how says your Lordship, is Warren Hastings, Esquire, Guilty or Not Guilty of the said charge?" And hereupon Lord Douglas stood up, uncovered, and laying his right hand on his breast, pronounced —"Not Guilty, upon my honour!" The question was then put successively to all the other peers present. Twenty-three said "Not Guilty," and only six said "Guilty."* On the other charges the majority in Hastings's favour was still greater; and on several of them he was unanimously acquitted. When all the charges had been put and severally answered by that thin attendance of peers, Hastings was called to the bar, and, in the not very friendly voice of Loughborough, informed that he was acquitted by the Lords, and solemnly discharged. Hastings bowed gracefully and retired; and the curtain fell on this long drama.†

He was acquitted: but, if his honour and character were cleared, his purse, in a worse sense, was cleared also; and for some time there seemed a chance of his concluding his eventful career on the debtors' side of some English prison. Besides the enormous expenses of the trial, the sums paid to Law, Plumer, Dallas, and his other lawyers, to the newspaper men and the pamphleteers, he had laid out or contracted debts to of about 40,000*l.* in building, and improving; for, just as th gan, he succeeded in purchasin ford, the seat of his ancestors, whic been alienated more than seventy y As the old manor-house was in ruins, he had knocked it down and had built a new one; he had dug a lake, constructed a grotto, and laid out the grounds with great taste. Probably some of the money which his wife had saved had bee spent for these purposes, for it was nearly all gone, and her husband was deeply in debt.* Pitt had spoken in the House of Commons about indemnification, *if* the charges should not be made good; but there was slight hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, hampered for ways and means to prosecute the terrible war raging with France, would ever attempt to carry a grant of public money for this object. The great house in Leadenhall-street afforded a better prospect than St. Stephen's Chapel; and it seemed natural to expect that the court of directors would make up his losses, and afford him the means of living in comfort for the rest of his days. In effect, at the desire of nine proprietors, a general court of the East India Company was held on the 29th of May (1795), at which two resolutions were passed, recommending that indemnification should be made by the Company to Mr. Hastings for the legal expenses he had incurred; and that, in consideration of his important services, a pension of 5000*l.* a year should be granted to him and his representatives during the term of the Company's exclusive trade. Both these questions were determined by ballot in the affirmative, within five days of their being first proposed. Hastings thought that all his expenses in the prosecution should be paid, not by the Company, but by the nation, who, through the House of Commons, had undertaken the impeachment. It is said that he had even refused to apply to the Company in

* Those who said Not Guilty were—Lord Douglas, Lord Fife, Lord Somers, Lord Rawdon (Earl of Moira), Lord Walsingham, Lord Thurlow, Lord Hawke, Lord Boston, Lord Sandys, Lord Middleton, the Bishop of Rochester (Dr. Horsley), the Bishop of Bangor (Dr. Warren), Viscounts Sidney and Falmouth, the Earls of Dorchester, Beverley, Warwick, and Coventry, Marquess Townsend, the Dukes of Bridgewater and Leeds, the Earl of Mansfield, and the Archbishop of York. Those who said Guilty were—the Earls of Carnarvon, Radnor, Fitzwilliam, and Suffolk, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Lord Chancellor Loughborough.

† Hist. of the Trial.—Ann. Regist.—Mill, Hist. Brit. Ind.

* *The origina* purchase-money for Daylesford was no great sum. "From an entry in his diary, dated the 26th of August, 1788, I find that he that day completed the purchase and that the first cost, including an annuity o 100*l.* a year to Mr. Knight and his wife, amounted barely to 11,400*l.*" —*Gleig, Life.*

this matter, and that his friends had made the application in spite of him. "I feel," said he, in a letter to one of these friends, "equally with you, that I shall suffer great injustice, if, after having been acquitted on every charge, I be left to pay my own costs during the trial; but my claim lies not against the Company, but against the British nation. I have been subjected to a long, and, as the issue has proved, an unmerited prosecution, at the instance of the people of England, or at least of their representatives. It is for the country at large, not for any corporate body of its inhabitants, to replace me on the ground which I occupied ere the prosecution began; and if parliament refuse this act of justice, I must submit. I can have no claim whatever upon the court of directors."* But Pitt and his government were not only disinclined to make any grant of public money, but were also determined to throw obstructions in the way of the generosity or common justice of the Company. By Pitt's India Bill, the power of the Company to recompense their servants and dependents had been very considerably restrained. The court of proprietors and the court of directors united could no longer vote away sums of money out of the territorial revenue, without the sanction of the board of control, which meant, of course, the sanction of the ministry of the day. In the present instance the board of control showed no alacrity or good will. They returned no answer whatever to the application made by the directors till the beginning of the following year (1796). In the mean time they had consulted the attorney and solicitor general as to the strict legal interpretation of the restricting clauses in the bill; and, when they sent in their tardy answer to Leadenhall Street, it was about equally unfavourable to the granting of money for paying the law expenses as to the granting the pension or annuity. This left Hastings in a cruel dilemma, oppressed with debt, with a ministry who would neither give nor let give, with a prison staring him in the face. The majority both of the court of proprietors and of the court of directors felt for his trying situation, and were sincerely earnest in their endeavours to relieve him. At nearly every meeting they took the subject of his losses and embarrassments into consideration; they made fresh applications to the board of control; they entered into a long controversy with the government; and some of them privately lent Hastings money to enable him to quiet a few of his most troublesome creditors. At one time, it is said, the late governor-general of India, who had managed so many millions of money, and disposed of principalities and powers, was left in so sad a state of impecuniosity, as not to have wherewith to pay his weekly bills. Luckily Hastings had none of the morbid irritability of Lord Clive—luckily his liver was not a diseased, but a sound one, and he had no chronic spasms or malady of any kind—or he might have made his exit from this world as his predecessor had done! At length, however, after frequent representations and remonstrances from the proprietors and directors, a sort of compromise, sufficiently mean and absurd, was entered into by the board of control and the directors. On the 7th of March (1796) it was announced at a general court at Leadenhall Street, that the board of control and the court of directors had agreed to grant to Hastings an annuity of 4000*l.* for twenty-eight years and a half, to date from June the 24th, 1785. Nothing was determined respecting the reimbursement of his law expenses: but, in order to relieve him from his embarrassments, a sum of 50,000*l.* was *lent* to him by the Company, for eighteen years and without interest.

We have left to others the task of representing this extraordinary and indisputably great man as a perfect being without spot or blemish; and have endeavoured to show the evil as well as the good that was in him, charitably intimating that the far greater part of the evil arose out of his Indian education, the loose and at times infamous policy of his employers, the tremendous difficulties of his situation, and the vehement passion which we fancy every Englishman must have felt in contending, in a season of

* Letter in Gleig's Life.

disgrace and disaster, with the French for the real dominion of Hindustan. Burke he seems to have forgiven in part: but he never forgave Dundas or Pitt, from whom he had at first expected not enmity, but favour and support; and he was ready to indulge his animosity against Pitt even at the expense of political principle, and at the risk of seriously injuring his country. He, however, had little opportunity of gratifying this dangerous revenge, for he had no wealth to make him considerable as an owner of seats and a controller of votes in parliament, and no ability as a public speaker. He was too old to acquire the latter habit, being considerably past sixty before he was acquitted and set at some ease in his circumstances. He continued, indeed, to exercise some trifling influence and patronage in the East India House, where he was often anxiously consulted; but he never got into the House of Commons. The last twenty-four years of his life—for so long did he survive his acquittal—were spent chiefly at Daylesford, of which he made a beautiful place. Though excluded from power and dignity, though deprived of the coronet and the red riband with which his hopes had flattered him when he quitted India, he had, most happily, tastes, habits, and pursuits which made retirement not only an endurable, but a joyous thing. He delighted in equestrian exercise, and in riding through a pleasant country on beautiful high-bred Arab horses: he was a farmer, a landscape gardener, a rearer of cattle, and an enthusiastic horticulturist and lover of flowers. He was, moreover, a busy writer both in prose and verse, addicting himself as he grew older more exclusively to rhyming; but notwithstanding the plaudits of his biographer, it may be doubted whether Hastings's poetry ever ranged above that pleasant gentlemanly order called "occasional verses," or *vers de société*, in which he himself evidently intended it to rank.*

He bred horses, reared sheep, fatted bullocks, and made various experiments in the introduction of new plants and animals. He tried to naturalise in England that delicious fruit of Bengal, the leechee; he imported seeds and slips of a very fine kind of apple-tree which grew in the governor's villa of Allipore, near Calcutta; he attempted to naturalise the goat of the table-land of Thibet, whose down supplies the materials for the finest shawls of Cashmere, as also the breed of cattle of Bootan, whose peculiar tails are considered a great beauty, and are in high esteem in the East as the best fans for driving away the musquitos. At the same time he suggested to his friends in India various improved methods for growing grasses, feeding elephants, &c. &c. His letters at this time are chiefly the letters of a gentleman farmer, abounding in little traits of character which make one love the man. Notwithstanding his advancing years and his pleasant occupations, he had, however, occasional visitations of ambition. On the death of Pitt and the breaking up of the Tory cabinet in 1806, he put himself forward as a Whig, and wrote to Colonel MacMahon, the private secretary of the Prince of Wales, to request an audience of the prince, who had on various occasions treated him with much kindness. The audience was immediately granted, and Hastings was received at Carlton House with every mark of respect. To the prince's question, "What were the specific objects he looked to?" he replied, not without some symptoms of senility, that his first object had once been public employment—employment either in the board of control or the government of India; but that now he had relinquished all such thoughts, which, perhaps, he ought never to have entertained; that his next view was to obtain some reparation from the House of Commons for the injuries which he had sustained from their impeachment, particularly as, though acquitted, he yet stood branded on their records as a traitor to his country and false to his trust; that the third point on which he had wished to speak regarded the expectations which a royal highness had himself excited in the breast of that

* Mr. Gleig more than half threatens the public with a whole volume of the poetical effusions which the ex-governor-general used to read to his guests at the breakfast-table at Daylesford; but we hope, for Hastings's sake, that the reverend biographer will never put this threat into execution.

person whose wishes he had ever preferred to his own. [This, of course, alluded to his German-born wife, his "elegant Marian," who was very desirous of becoming an English peeress.] "Though the best, the most amiable of women," said Hastings (who informs us that the prince responded "*She is so*"), "she is still a woman, and would prefer her participation in a title to any benefit that could be bestowed upon me." His royal highness thought that there would be no harm in his trying for the peerage; said he must employ Lord Grenville and Lord Moira to bring it about, and bade him go immediately to Moira, and tell his lordship that he (the prince) desired it. The coronet, however, was found not to be attainable; and he was fain, as he expressed it, "to be content to go down to the grave with the plain name of Warren Hastings."* It appears he never again attempted to obtain either title or office, and that this disappointment did not long disturb his happy disposition; and, though he never obtained any reparation from the House of Commons, he lived to see himself received in that assembly with extraordinary marks of reverence or respect. In 1813, when the East India Company's charter was to be renewed, much discussion took place in parliament, and it was determined to examine at the bar, among other witnesses, this remarkable old man. The Commons received him with acclamations, ordered a chair to be set for him, and, when he retired, rose and uncovered—all but one or two who had been managers at the trial,† and a very few of their friends, who believed, with them, that the impeachment had not been unnecessary, and that Hastings's character had not been purified by the ordeal. "This examination of Hastings," says one present, who had himself recently returned from India, "was a very striking exhibition. The appearance of a man of fine countenance, and in possession of spirit and strength, as well as understanding, at the distance of thirty years after he had retired from the supreme government, respectfully listened to as a witness, at the same bar where he had been arraigned as a culprit, created a strong interest."* In the House of Lords, where he was examined shortly after, he was received with equal respect. He was now eighty-one years old, "too late a week," one might have thought, for academical honours; yet the University of Oxford chose this season for conferring on him the honorary degree of doctor of laws; and when the octogenarian went into the Sheldonian theatre, the junior members of the university rose to a man and greeted him with tumultuous cheering. The oration in Latin was delivered by Dr. Phillimore; and Mr. Elijah Barwell Impey, one of the sons of his friend and fellow-sufferer, Sir Elijah Impey, wrote a poem in English on the occasion, describing, in spirited verse, the great man's career, and coupling him with Nelson, who had fallen at Trafalgar, and with Wellington, who had triumphed over the French in the Peninsula, as a great benefactor of his country. In 1814 Hastings unexpectedly received an official intimation that the prince regent had added his name to the list of privy councillors; and that his presence was desired at the next meeting of the council, in order to his being sworn in. He hastened from Daylesford to accept the honour; and he was admitted to a long audience by the regent. In the summer of the same year, when the allied sovereigns came over to England and visited Oxford, Hastings was especially invited by the University to meet them there; and his entrance into the Sheldonian theatre was again hailed with the noisiest acclamations of the undergraduates. He followed the sovereigns to London, and was present as a guest at the magnificent entertainment which the city gave to them in Guildhall on the 18th of June. On this occasion the prince regent himself presented him to the Emperor of

* Hastings's own Diary, as cited by Gleig.

† These managers sat in the very same seats which they had occupied in 1795, when they had received the vote of thanks, moved by Pitt, for the services they had rendered in Westminster Hall; for by the courtesy and usage of the House, a member who has been once thanked in his place is considered as having a right to that place ever afterwards.

* Letter of Sir James Mackintosh, dated April the 3rd, 1813, in Life by his Son.

Russia and the King of Prussia, as one of the greatest men of this country; and declared publicly that higher honours than a seat in the privy council were in store for him—that he should yet be honoured as he deserved. But nothing came of these fine promises; and, in the midst of all these flattering distinctions, he was again allowed to be distressed by pecuniary cares: for his resources, after his law expenses and his other debts had been discharged, were not very considerable, and his farming, planting, and experimentalising, the hospitality he constantly kept up at Daylesford, and his sundry other tastes and habits, were rather costly. He had been compelled by fresh debts to apply to the court of directors once or twice before for assistance, which had not been refused; and now in the eighty-second year of his age, he appeared again before the directors as a suitor, for he had outlived the period for which his annuity had been fixed, and there was nothing except that provision between him and pauperism. After some delay the court of directors agreed to continue the annuity for the term of his natural life. Hastings, of himself, or through his friends, had ventured to ask that the annuity should be raised to 5000*l.*, and that the name of Mrs. Hastings should be included in the grant; but the court declined acceding to either of these propositions, and at this Hastings was much hurt, for, though he had no children to provide for, he was anxious for his much-loved wife, who was likely to survive him, and who did survive him a good number of years. It appears, however, that the elastic-minded old man did not long permit these things to depress him. In 1816, when in the eighty-fourth year of his age, he rebuilt the old parish church of Daylesford, which stood upon his own land, urging on the work with characteristic eagerness, and pleasantly boasting, when it was finished, that he had done it all in just four months. At last, on the 22nd of August, 1818, he died, and was interred behind the chancel of that church, among the bones and dust of his ancestors. His clear intellect was unclouded to the last, his illness was very short, and he met death with the utmost composure. Among his numerous merits, and the great deeds that will preserve his name in the history of his country, must be mentioned the noble encouragement he gave while in power to liberal studies and curious researches. He patronised most liberally travels in the various countries of the East, experiments, institutions for promoting education, publications, and all useful or elegant projects. As well by his example as by his munificence he gave an impulse to learning in the indolent atmosphere of Bengal. He acquired himself a deep knowledge of Persian and Arabic literature; and, though he did not learn that mysterious and jealously guarded language himself, he was the first that succeeded in gaining the confidence of the Pundits, or hereditary priests of India, whereby he obtained for other English scholars and students the key to Sanscrit, and to the secrets of the ancient Brahminical theology and jurisprudence. It was under his protection that the Asiatic Society commenced its career; and it was during his administration that Englishmen really began to acquire that knowledge of India, and the character, habits, and institutions of the people, without which our anomalous empire could not have been maintained for any length of time.

The fate of Hastings's friend Sir Elijah Impey was rather different. Through his triumphant refutation of the Nuncomar charge, his prosecution or persecution was of but very short duration, and he continued to retain the friendship and regard of his earlier acquaintance, and of some of the most eminent and best men of the day. At the general election in 1790, Sir Elijah, by means of a committee, canvassed Stafford, and thought of contesting that borough with Sheridan, who, next to Burke, had been the bitterest of his assailants. All the electioneering tricks were resorted to by the Sheridan party, who, regardless of the decision of the House of Commons, placarded the late chief justice of Bengal as the infamous murderer of Nuncomar, and carried in their processions pictures of a man hanging on a gallows with other ingenious devices to exasperate the popular

m d against the new candidate. Some sh rt time after, however, Sir Elijah took hi seat in the House of Commons as representative of the borough of New Romney. About the year 1797 he retired into private life. In the mean time the fortune which he had made in India, and which was never more than a moderate one, had been greatly reduced through a too credulous belief in the stability of the financial system of M. Necker. The costs incidental to his defence in the House of Commons—for which he was never remunerated—had not been inconsiderable; he was apprehensive of increased expense from an impending impeachment, which would have ruined him; and, naturally anxious about a provision for his wife and children, he yielded, like many others at that time who had less reason, to the temptation of high interest, and invested a great part of his capital in the French funds. There it could not have been touched by managers of impeachments and lawyers in Westminster Hall; but the fast-coming Revolution swept it all away, passing its remorseless sponge at once over capital and interest. This investment being lost at the commencement of the troubles in France, and not recovered till after his death, at the peace of Paris, and then only in part, Sir Elijah parted with his house in London, and lived entirely at a country-house, Newick Park, in Sussex, which he rented of Lord Vernon. There was not a man living in that distinguished neighbourhood, where good men were not and are not scarce, more generally esteemed for kindness of heart and for all the social virtues; and many who are still living can bear ample testimony to the fact.* For the sake of his children who are yet living, and whose very reverence and fond attachment to his memory prove that he was no common man, we venture upon these details, which more properly belong to biography than to history; and we do it the more readily and earnestly because their hearts have been made to bleed by the severity of the recent attacks on their father's memory. Sir Elijah died on the 12th of October, 1809, aged seventy-six, and was buried at Hammersmith, the place of his birth, where a plain tablet marks the spot where he lies.*

Until death removed that eminent statesman, Lord Shelburne, the first Marquess of Lansdowne, (in 1805,) Impey retained his friendship and frequent intercourse, which assuredly would never have been the case if the least doubt had existed in his lordship's mind as to any part of his judicial conduct in India. The friendship with Hastings, with the most familar correspondence, continued undisturbed till Impey's own decease, and was then continued by Hastings to his widow and children. In disproof of a very mischievous report that there existed a difference between him and his official brother, Sir Robert Chambers, their intimacy continued when Chambers returned to England, and, when that friend and familiar associate of Dr. Johnson died at Paris in the year 1803, Sir Elijah paid the last offices of friendship by attending his funeral. When Sir Gilbert Elliot, as Lord Minto, went to India as governor-general in 1807, he patronised to his utmost and showed every possible kindness to a son of Sir Elijah Impey, who was in the country, in the Company's service. Sir Gilbert, it will be remembered, had moved the impeachment, and had made the terrible speech in the House of Commons, charging Im-

* Private information, authenticated by letters, &c.

* An anecdote is related in his family, which shows the gentleness of the old man's disposition. When he was dying it was necessary to remove him from a couch to his bed: during this operation he leaned unintentionally with his whole weight on a female domestic, who shrunk with some little exclamation of pain; his last intelligible words were, "I fear I hurt you, my dear." He vividly retained his classical recollections in old age, in pain, and almost in death. As they were applying leeches, he recited Horace's line—

Non missura cutim nisi plena cruoris hirudo.

At Cambridge Impey had obtained very high academical honours, on commencing batchelor of arts as fellow of Trinity College. In the Cambridge Calendar, under the head of Triposes, A.D. 1756, the second name on the column is * Impey (B), Col. Trinit. The marks designate that he was fellow of a college, and had obtained the junior chancellor's medal, instituted in 1752, and for which none are qualified to contend who have not previously won a mathematical prize. In other words, Impey was junior wrangler and chancellor's medalist.

pey with the legal murder of Nuncomar, &c. In attacking Sir Elijah Impey, Sir Gilbert Elliot had in a manner assailed the character and memory of his own brother; and now, perhaps, as Lord Minto, he was anxious to make some amends to both by his friendship and patronage to Impey's son.

Yet Burke persisted to the last hour of his life in believing and asserting his belief, in all places and on all occasions, that Warren Hastings, at least, was guilty of all the crimes that had been charged against him; and that the impeachment, which had cost him such an immensity of toil, was a necessary and a holy work. In 1796, when the trial had been disposed of, he said:—"Were I to call for a reward, which I have never done, it should be for those services in which, for fourteen years without intermission, I showed the most industry and had the least success—I mean in the affairs of India. They are those on which I value myself the most—most for the importance, most for the labour, most for the judgment, most for the constancy and perseverance in the pursuit. Others may value them most for the *intention*. In that, surely, they are not mistaken." * When Burke wrote these words he had achieved what others considered the greatest work of his whole life, literary and political; he had published his "Reflections," he had exposed and held up to detestation the French revolution, and he had broken for ever with his party and his friends rather than suffer them to harangue and write the people of England into a reverence and imitation of that revolution. The very men who had thought him insane in taking up the dark suggestions of Philip Francis, and in declaiming against Hastings and Impey as he had done, and in driving on an impeachment through so many years when all the world had grown weary of it, except the lawyers who pocketed the fees, now looked upon him as inspired by the spirit of prophecy and unearthly wisdom, and considered the services he had most recently rendered to government, morals, and social order, as the sublimest of all his works, the greatest of all possible benefits. But not so Burke: he continued to believe that his great work was the having exposed the dark deeds which had been committed in India, and in his having rendered difficult the recurrence of any such deeds. In 1796, when his heart was chastened with sorrows, when his only son had sunk into the grave, and when he himself was rapidly approaching the house appointed for all that live, he remonstrated with a friend who had ventured to speak of Hastings with respect and kindness. "I am surprised," said he, "at your speaking of such a man as Hastings with any degree of respect; at present I say nothing of those who chose to take his guilt upon themselves. I do not say I am not deeply concerned; God forbid that I should speak any other language. Others may be content to prevaricate in judgment; it is not my taste; but they who attack me for my fourteen years' labours on that subject, ought not to forget that I always acted under public authority, and not of my own fancy; and that, in condemning me, they asperse the whole House of Commons for conduct continued for the greater part of three parliaments." Even when quite broken-hearted and dying, and anxious to forgive and to be forgiven of all men, he thought of Warren Hastings in this hard manner. It was, as we have said, in Burke's nature to be rather over-vehement and excessive on every great subject he took to heart, and of these the impeachment was certainly one of the greatest. Yet, if his over-heat and natural enthusiasm proved too injurious and uncharitable to the object of the impeachment, it would be unwise and unfair to say that the impeachment itself, with all the investigations which preceded it, or to which it gave rise, was not calculated to produce eventually a great and lasting good. And without that enthusiasm, which of itself inevitably leads to exaggeration and excess, perhaps no mortal man would have undergone such an extremity of labour; and perhaps, without that ardour and passion, which a later age may turn into ridicule, other men would not have been sufficiently excited to go along with him in the laborious scrutiny of such remote matters, or have been awakened to

* Letter to a Noble Lord on his Pension.

an interest in the fate of the natives of India, the wrongs or sufferings of people dwelling at the distance of fifteen thousand miles from our shores. The long continued impeachment, which was heard of in almost every part and corner of the world, had the effect of telling the natives of India that there was a tribunal before which the greatest of the servants of the great Company might be brought to account and made to quail; it had the effect of telling those servants of the Company, and the government judges and other chiefs appointed by the crown, that they must take heed to their ways, and renounce the high-handed proceedings and [illegible] which may be need and settlement, [illegible]ble afterwards; and it co[illegible]ther with gradual and universal [illegible]ement in civilization, political philosophy, and moderation, to better the government of our Indian possessions and the condition of the teeming native population. Until public virtue and political science were improved at home, there could be no hope of any improvement in the management of such remote possessions: in proportion as men became honester and wiser, more moderate and tolerant at [illegible]e, they became, perhaps with some pardonable difference in the degree, honester and wiser and better rulers abroad. Without this gradual improvement, the effect of Burke's labours of fourteen years might have been very inconsiderable; but linked with it, and going hand-in-hand with it, we believe them to have been of a potent efficacy, and to have afforded good reason to many millions of men to bless the name and the memory of the great manager. The regular publication in the newspapers of the debates in parliament (a benefit which had been fully secured not many years before the impeachment began), the reports of the grand speeches delivered in Westminster Hall, the crowd of books, the shoals of pamphlets, published year after year, had also the effect of familiarising the popular mind with the vast subject of India, and of leading the people to reflect upon occurrences and things and places they had never thought of before, and whose names were all unknown to them. Up to this time, even among the educated classes of Englishmen, few, very few, except the Company's servants and some naval and military officers, knew much about Hindustan; and Fox had good reason to exclaim—"The affairs of India had long been hid in a darkness as hostile to inquiry as it was friendly to guilt, but by the exertions of ONE MAN these clouds have been dissipated!" Almost a new vocabulary was introduced into the language, and the people of England learned to give a proper meaning to numerous Eastern words which had been unintelligible and rarely used before.

END OF VOLUME I.

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